THE

HISTORY

OF

OPHELIA.

BY MISS FIELDING.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

ADVERTISEMENT.

I Am obliged to Fortune for the papers I now offer to the publick. I little imagined, when I bought an old bureau, that I was purchaſing a work of fancy; for ſuch I muſt ſuſpect this little work to be, though it contains many incidents that bear ſo much the appearance of reality, that they might claim ſome ſhare of our belief. I have not been able, by any enquiry, to find out the author, or the lady to whom it was addreſſed: but I hope I ſhall not give offence to either of them by the publication; for if the ſtory is fictitious, in all probability it muſt have been deſigned for the preſs, as it is unlikely any one ſhould put their invention on ſo laborious a taſk, merely for their own amuſement; and if the ſtory is real, it is pity adventurers ſo new and entertaining ſhould be buried in oblivion; eſpecially when they, and the reflections ſcattered throughout the book, are as well calculated for inſtruction as amuſement.

THE AUTHOR OF DAVID SIMPLE.

INTRODUCTION.

YOUR Ladyſhip had little compaſſion, either on yourſelf or me, when you deſired me to write you an exact account of every circumſtance of my life, and even of my thoughts; or you did not conſider the long detail into which this led me; a detail too tedious for you to read, and difficult for me to write. You expreſsly deſire to know the impreſſions I received, from the firſt view of cuſtoms ſo unlike what I had ever ſeen, at a time when they are become ſo familiar to me, that I almoſt forget many of them were ever otherwiſe. But your commands can meet with nothing but an implicit obedience from me; and when I mention the difficulties which may occur in the execution, it is not with a deſign of diſputing them, but to excuſe my ill performance of the taſk.

You ſay I muſt firſt account for the ignorance in which I was educated. This is obliging me to trouble your ladyſhip with more adventures than my own; and is ſcarcely in order, ſince it makes me begin with the relation of circumſtances which I was not acquainted with till a conſiderable time after my hiſtory of myſelf will end.

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OPHELIA.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAP. I.

MY father, whoſe name was Lenox, was the ſon of a Scotch nobleman. His future fortune depended on his riſe in the army, wherein he was only a captain when he married his colonel's daughter. The colonel was then in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption, of which he expired in leſs than two months after his daughter's marriage. Beſides her, he left another daughter; and they equally ſhared four thouſand pounds, which was his whole fortune. My father died in the third year of his marriage, leaving his wife with child of me. Her grief for the loſs of her huſband was ſo great, her friends feared it would prove fatal both to her and myſelf: but, a little before the uſual time, I entered the world alive, contrary to their expectations; but my mother expired before the end of her month.

My father's family were too far off London, the place of my birth, to think of ſo poor an orphan as myſelf; for my mother's fortune was conſiderably impaired: and of her ſide I had no near relation but my aunt, to whoſe care I naturally fell, and her humanity readily undertook the office. My aunt was about twenty-two years old; and was juſt then deſerted by an officer with whom every preliminary of marriage was agreed, when her father's death put a ſtop to it, though he had a better fortune than is common to gentlemen of his profeſſion. It then appeared that her charms had leſs influenced her lover than the hopes of obtaining preferment by her father's intereſt; for, in a feigned obedience to a pretended command from an uncle, he broke off the match.

As my aunt had conſented to marry in compliance with her father's inclination more than her own, her indifference afforded her ſufficient conſolation. Her lover's behaviour filled her with contempt; and independence gave her pleaſure. But this was not long uninterrupted: ſhe had beauty to excite love; and though her underſtanding was uncommonly good, it could not render her inſenſible to the charms of a young nobleman, who became enamoured of her. A woman's heart is never in ſo perilous a ſituation, as when vanity joins with a lover's perſuaſions in attacking it. My aunt atlaſt grew ſo great a ſlave to her paſſion, that ſhe conſented to a private marriage, which her lover earneſtly entreated, as the only means of reconciling his impatient fondneſs with the fear of his father's anger.

Soon after their marriage, her huſband, who was in the army, was ſtationed with his regiment in one of the Ameri-

can iſlands. This gave my aunt rather pleaſure than concern. While ſhe had his company, ſhe could not regret what ſhe left behind; and as he promiſed to own her as his wife when he had got ſo far out of the obſervation of his father, her only uneaſineſs was removed: for notwithſtanding ſhe flattered herſelf that when her marriage ſhould be made publick, ſhe ſhould recover her blaſted reputation, yet, though blinded with love to the utmoſt exceſs of infatuation, ſhe was mortified at the wounds which preſent ſecreſy made in her character. I was the partner of her voyage, and we arrived ſafe at our deſtined port.

In this place we lived till I was two years old; my aunt happy that the ſole endeavour of her life, which was to pleaſe her huſband, ſucceeded ſo well: for though his paſſion was viſibly abated, yet ſtill he was eaſy, good-humoured, and affectionate. But one fatal day deprived her of this felicity. After receiving a packet from England, ſhe perceived him thoughtful and uneaſy: fearing ſome misfortune had befallen him, ſhe preſſed to know the occaſion; but the more earneſtly ſhe urged it, the more gloomy he appeared. Two or three days paſſed in this manner; which were moſt afflicting to her, who only lived in his ſmiles. The ſecreſy he obſerved made her apprehend that the news particularly concerned herſelf; and, judging of his heart by her own, imagined his great pain was how to impart it to her, and to ſupport her under it. Senſible that while he was well, nothing could make her wretched, her deſire of relieving his uneaſineſs was greater than her fear of any impending evil which her imagination could repreſent; and finding ſome invention was neceſſary to come at the knowledge of what he would not diſcover, ſhe contrived to get at the letters he had laſt received from England, happy in the thoughts of putting an end to his concern, by ſhewing him how well ſhe could ſupport any misfortune while bleſſed with his tender regard.

In this temper of mind, ſhe opened the only letter he had not communicated to her; already prepared to acquaint him with the effects of a curioſity, which, if ever it can be, was ſo in this caſe, laudable; and to ſhew her affection by her courage and compoſure: but what was her ſurprize when ſhe read the following words.

'DO not imagine I am going to reproach the man whoſe perfidiouſneſs I muſt ever deſpiſe: that office I leave to your own conſcience, which muſt long, without my awakening it, have performed this duty, though it's admonitions have had no effect on him who can break through all ties divine and human. I am above complaining of injuries I can avenge; and only write to inform you, that I will acquaint your father with our marriage and your ſubſequent behaviour, unleſs you immediately on the receipt of this declare it to him, and do me the juſtice for which I patiently waited, till your neglect of me, and attachment to the ſtrumpet who now ſhares your bed, changed all my love into rage and reſentment. Think not to intimidate me with the effects of your father's anger; his pride cannot inflict any thing ſo cruel as your faithleſs ingratitude has made me ſuffer. My character will be cleared, and my injuries revenged; which are the wiſhes neareſt the heart of your much-injured wife.'

Your ladyſhip will eaſily believe, that no diſtreſs could exceed what my aunt felt at the peruſal of this fatal letter. It was long before her grief and aſtoniſhment would ſuffer her to go through the whole; frequently was ſhe obliged to leave off, and give vent to her paſſions, which for ſome time rendered her unable to proceed, when every line ſeemed armed with freſh daggers to pierce her ſoul. My uncle did not come home the whole day; and ſhe employed the time of his abſence, after the firſt burſt of her grief was abated, in obtaining a command over herſelf, and a compoſure of behaviour which might conceal her knowledge of his treachery till ſhe could get into her hands the anſwer to this letter, from whence ſhe ſhould more certainly judge of the truth of the affair. She was not long obliged to put this cruel force upon herſelf; a ſhip was to ſail for England in two days, and the diſpatches deſigned to go by it were to be ſent the day before. My aunt had laid her plan, and it ſucceeded. But the gratification of her curioſity was to be always painful to her. With far different ſentiments from thoſe with which ſhe opened the former letter, ſhe now broke the ſeal of her huſband's; though yet a ray of hope ſhone upon her afflicted mind, and told her that poſſibly

poſſibly he might not be ſo guilty as the other had painted him: but this ſmall and flattering conſolation was ſoon extinguiſhed by reading the contents, which were as follow.

'CAN ſo much cruelty and beauty
'dwell together? and can the unavoidable conſequences of an afflicting abſence extinguiſh the remains of love in that once fond breaſt? My own ruin I would ſmile at, if it gave you pleaſure, did not yours depend upon it. Will you blaſt all my endeavours towards raiſing you to a ſplendid fortune, by an untimely diſcovery? I ſhall ſoon leave this place: ſtay then, my angel, but till my return to England, and I will acknowledge you as the choice of my heart; and my entreaties, united with the force of your charms, ſhall make a haughty father confeſs you were made to adorn the rank which avarice might wiſh to refuſe you. That my ſincerity, in one great point, may prove the confidence you may venture to have in my word, I frankly confeſs I have a woman here; but ſhe is only the amuſement of my idle moments, while all my ſerious hours are ſpent in lamenting your abſence, and ſtudying your advancement. I cannot defend the inconſtancy of my actions; but my heart has never wavered. Let youth, and this forced ſeparation from you, plead in my favour; and incline you to forgive the man who henceforward will live only for you, and be ever your moſt tenderly-affectionate huſband.'

CHAP. II.

MY aunt, now convinced of her misfortune, and ſpurred on by reſentment, carried the two letters to the governor, and threw herſelf under his protection. As ſoon as her huſband became acquainted with all that had paſſed, he endeavoured to perſuade her that his letter was framed to pacify a deſperate woman, for whom he never had but a childiſh fondneſs, which ended with all his other boyiſh fancies; but that to gain his preſent purpoſe, he was reduced to profeſs to her the ſentiments he only retained for my aunt. He aſſured her that, on his return to England, he would have their marriage ratified, and prove the other woman's claim was not legal: of the falſehood of this, his letter was a ſufficient teſtimony. My aunt, though ſhe had at firſt ſuffered the imputation, could not bear the reality of Vice: ſhe abſolutely refuſed to return to a houſe where Virtue would no longer permit her to inhabit. She demanded her fortune and mine, which had been put into his hands: but only five hundred pounds remained unſpent; that, by the governor's authority and influence, he was obliged to pay her.

With this little ſum, my aunt determined to fly all human kind. Deprived of the object of her affections, her peace, and reputation, what charms could the world have for her? She would relinquiſh all at once; and left the country, with no companion but myſelf, in ſearch of a retreat far from the ſight of human kind. We landed in the weſt. My aunt's romantick deſpair led her into Wales; where ſhe found a ſmall cottage, ſituated on the ſide of a hill, commanding a beautiful, though a wild and mountainous, proſpect. At the foot of the hill was a delightful valley; to which, from our cottage, we were led by a fine grove of trees: on the ſide of the grove ran a clear brook, with ſeveral ſmall caſcades intermixed, deſcending into the valley; where it flowed, in beautiful meanders, till it loſt itſelf in a little wood. This place was too well ſuited to a love-ſick deſpair not to excite my aunt's envy. She went to it, and found it inhabited by an old man, and two young women, his daughters. She offered him whatever price he would require, if he could be tempted to ſell it. His daughters, preferring the human ſpecies to the vegetable creation, had, for above a year, been endeavouring to prevail on the old man to leave a cottage which was ſituated above twenty miles diſtant from any other houſe: their ſucceſs continued doubtful, when my aunt's offer added weight to their perſuaſions. That one ſound of a little more than the value will tempt an old man to ſell every remaining bleſſing. Avarice, in the uſe of life, abſorbs all other paſſions. It is no wonder, therefore, if ſo ſtrong a motive, united with the earneſt endeavours of the two girls, procured my aunt the ſucceſs ſhe wiſhed. The greateſt part of our little pittance was laid out in the purchaſe of this cottage,

tage, a garden belonging to it, the adjacent grove, all the paſture-land, with the goats it fed, and ſome poultry. My aunt, beſides neceſſaries for herſelf and me, carried ſeveral books, materials for writing, and for various kinds of work. The impatience of the old man's daughters conquered the tedioufneſs of age; and my aunt got into full poſſeſſion of her little purchaſe, without more delay than was neceſſary for her to learn to milk her goats, and the other parts of rural buſineſs, ſo new to her. When the former inhabitants left the place, and my aunt ſaw nothing about her but the animals to whom ſhe was to give her care and attendance, and from whom ſhe was to receive the grateful return of ſupport and ſuſtenance, except myſelf, then as ignorant of evil, and almoſt as dumb, as they, ſhe began to enjoy a greater compoſure of ſpirits: deſpair was ſoftened into melancholy; and air, exerciſe, and all-healing time, by degrees alleviated her ſorrows, and at length raiſed her to content and tranquillity. My aunt's firſt amuſement was the adorning her cottage: it was her laſt likewiſe; for ſhe was continually ornamenting it during the whole time ſhe ſtaid there; taking pleaſure in beautifying it, though no one was likely to behold either her or her habitation. The care of my education ſoon ſhared her leiſure; and, in time, became her principal employment. But, deſirous not to leſſen my innocence and ſimplicity, while ſhe diſpelled my ignorance, ſhe gave me no account of the manners and cuſtoms of a people with whom ſhe hoped I ſhould never have any intercourſe. The books ſhe had brought into Wales were chiefly books of divinity, and ſuch hiſtories as ſerved to enlarge and inſtruct the mind of the reader, without informing him of the exiſtence of vices, which a pure imagination, untaught by obſervation and experience, cannot repreſent to itſelf. My aunt ſo artfully diverſified my employments, that, found as I was of reading, I had not peruſed all her little library when I left this ſolitude, where I could for ever have contentedly remained. My aunt's tender affection, and reaſonable indulgence, filled my heart, and ſatisfied my deſires. We made our nights very ſhort; and yet our days were never too long. The vernal beauties of the finer ſeaſons charmed our eyes; the tuneful choir of birds enchanted our ears; and both united to raiſe our contemplations to their Creator. We were grateful for general bleſſings; not leſs eſteemed by us for being common to all mankind: we wanted no partial favours. We ſaw much to admire, much to rejoice in, and nothing to envy.

CHAP. III.

IN this happy tranquillity I lived with my aunt, till one evening that we were juſt returned from walking by our little brook, and admiring the reflexion of the moon, then at the full, and which, ſhining on the water, 'a new heaven in it's 'fair boſom ſhewed.' Before we entered the houſe, we were greatly aſtoniſhed to hear a human voice; a ſound ſo ſtrange to us, that we could not ſufficiently recover our ſurprize to return an anſwer to the call. Nor was our wonder abated at ſeeing ourſelves accoſted by a young gentleman whoſe cloaths outſhone the gentle luſtre of the moon, at leaſt to eyes ſo unaccuſtomed as mine to any but the plaineſt dreſs. At firſt, ſurprize had fixed me to the ground; but as I began to recover from the ſudden impreſſion, the firſt effect of my abated fear was to fly from this ſtrange phantom, for ſuch it appeared to me. I was directing my trembling ſteps to the houſe, when the ſtranger, with accents of the greateſt earneſtneſs and diſtreſs, cried out—'Stay, 'beauteous angel!—ſtay!' Whether the harmony of his voice, or the ſweetneſs of the flattering appellation, was moſt powerful, I know not; but my feet ſlackened their pace; and looking round, I ſaw him bending towards me in the moſt ſuppliant poſture, with geſtures, which I thought almoſt prophane to addreſs to a mortal being: yet was the humility not diſpleaſing. The moon ſhone full upon him, and was bright enough to ſhew me a face, which, notwithſtanding female vanity, the only innate principle for which I contend, ſeemed to me far more beautiful than my own: a tranſcendency that before I could not conceive, having had no opportunity of comparing myſelf with any thing but my aunt's faded charms, worn with age, and blaſted by misfortunes. Nor was my admiration confined to the ſtranger's countenance; in his perſon appeared that elegant proportion, that

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Plate II.

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delicacy blended with dignity, of which the mind can judge without rule or compariſon. It is not ſurprizing that, as I had never ſeen any of my own ſpecies but my aunt, and a few times an old man, who had been at our houſe on occaſions neceſſary to our rural life, I ſhould be ſtruck with beauty which I have not ſeen equalled ſince I lived in the midſt of mankind, and which had no bad foil in the harſh groteſque features of a Swiſs attendant, who at that time accompanied him. My aunt, with a politeneſs ill agreeing with our rural appearance, addreſſed the ſtranger; who informed us, that, having made a viſit to an acquaintance on the borders of Wales, the face of the country had ſo charmed him by it's wild and natural beauties, that he had been tempted to ſpend a little time in viewing more of it; accordingly he left his friend's houſe two days before, and travelled where his fancy led him, without having been under any difficulty for neceſſary accommodations till then. Fine woods, and winding rivers, had attracted him to ſome diſtance from the road; and he had purſued the way thoſe beauties led him, without having ſeen even an inhabited hut ſince morning; but had not till then given up the expectation: when finding that, in an extenſive proſpect, his eye could diſcover no houſe but ours, he was induced to apply to our hoſpitality for a little refreſhment; not imagining that, by doing ſo, he ſhould behold charms that not only ſurpaſſed all the rural beauties which had captivated his fancy, but the moſt admirable part of the creation; ſuch as muſt for ever make him forget that Wales, or even the world, contained any other treaſure.

Flattery was ſo new to me, that I did not underſtand myſelf to be the treaſure he meant; though his eyes, which ſpoke Nature's language, (an univerſal dialect wherein even the ſavage can want no inſtruction) told his admiration in terms more intelligible to ſimple Nature's ſcholar. But my aunt's care informed me of the full extent of his expreſſions: no uncommon effect of prudery, which often diſcovers more than the moſt conſummate aſſurance. With a look of indignation—'Fye, Sir!' ſaid ſhe. 'Can you 'expect hoſpitality from us, when you, 'with more than ſavage cruelty, endeavour to pervert, with pernicious flattery, a mind hitherto educated in pu-'rity and truth?'

This rebuke, and the ſtranger's defence of himſelf, which greatly increaſed the crime laid to his charge, (for it was only begging pardon for the ſudden effect made on his ſenſes by the moſt ſtriking beauty he had ever beheld) left me no longer in doubt for the application of his compliment: but I could not find in myſelf any ſparks of my aunt's reſentment. Her's, however, was pacified by the gentleman's aſſurances of reſtraining his ſentiments within the bounds of ſilence: and after many entreaties, in which I at laſt joined, (ſurprized to find moroſeneſs and want of benevolence in a temper which I before thought all gentleneſs, love, and compaſſion) ſhe was prevailed upon to admit the ſtranger into our cottage.

If he was ſo ſuſceptible of wonder, or ſurprized at the ſight of a pretty woman, it is not extraordinary that he ſhould be very ſincerely aſtoniſhed at entering a little hovel, and finding in it neat rooms, furniſhed with the greateſt elegance, and ſo much in character, that even the embroidery of the chairs, curtains, bed, &c. was in a rural taſte; and every part of the houſe ornamented with things for which we had been indebted purely to Nature; and ſo peculiarly diſpoſed as to excel all the efforts of art: nor had the outſide of the houſe, the garden, and the reſt of our little territory, been neglected. The ſtranger, to whom I think I muſt, to avoid circumlocution, already give his title, and call him Lord Dorcheſter, though I knew it not at that time, was amazed beyond deſcription on entering the houſe. He began by an exclamation which made my aunt ſmile; and I found ſhe did not think compliments ſo dangerous when applied to herſelf, as when her darling niece was the ſubject of them. But I muſt do her the juſtice to own, that the more places I have ſeen which the art of man has been exhauſted to adorn, the more I am convinced that, on this ſubject, no expreſſions could exceed what her ingenuity juſtly deſerved. Sallads, milk, and eggs, were all our houſe afforded: theſe we ſet before our gueſt, with a cleanlineſs and ſimplicity, the novelty of which delighted him; and with truth he declared, that the whiteneſs of our wooden-bowls and platters ſcarcely were excelled by the lineh they

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were upon; and were, in his opinion, far preferable to ſilver or china. The ſame compliment he made to the freſhneſs and ſweetneſs of our fare; of which, though he might well be ſuppoſed hungry, we could not for a long time get him to taſte, his attention was ſo entirely engroſſed by all the wonders, as he expreſſed it, around him. He aſked us ſome queſtions concerning our way of life. I was ſo ſtruck with the novelty of the adventure, and ſo abaſhed with the preſence of a ſtranger, and his continual gazing at me, that I was quite dumb; but my aunt freely anſwered him: and as our actions were too innocent to require concealment, he received full ſatisfaction. He made my aunt ſome compliments on her good ſenſe and reaſon; declared the admiration her way of life had excited in him; and added, with a ſmile, that, if ſhe would excuſe him, he muſt juſt obſerve, that ſhe had abated his aſtoniſhment at finding ſuch a heavenly form in that place, ſince he now underſtood her niece to be no more than one might expect: for, from angelick food, an angelick life, angelick innocence, and the wiſe and virtuous inſtructions of a parent of more than human underſtanding and conduct, how could leſs excellence be expected? He found that the uniting my aunt in his compliment would not excuſe it; ſhe knit her brow, and awed him with ſilence on that ſubject: but his eyes became ſo much more eloquent for the reſtraint laid on his tongue, that my confuſion was inexpreſſible.

His curioſity was ſo happily tempered with politeneſs, that though he at laſt enquired how a perſon, whoſe qualifications ſhewed her to have been bred where every improvement of taſte and underſtanding was to be acquired, firſt came fixed in ſuch a ſolitude, ſo little impertinence appeared in the requeſt, that my aunt, though ſhe concealed the circumſtances, gave him ſuch a general account, as ſerved at leaſt to quiet his curioſity. The greateſt part of the night was ſpent in converſation: but at length, my aunt, in compaſſion for the fatigue her gueſt had undergone, offered him our bed, the only one our cottage contained; but he inſiſted on our keeping it; and aſſuring us he could ſufficiently repoſe himſelf on a couch that ſtood in the room where we then were, we left him to his reſt.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER a ſhort ſleep, riſing to our morning's employments, we found Lord Dorcheſter up before us, and employed in examining our library.

My aunt expreſſed her concern at not having had ſufficient conveniencies to afford his lordſhip the neceſſary refreſhment the night required. He aſſured her, that was not the reaſon of her finding him waking; but that his ſpirits were ſo agitated with ſurprize and pleaſure, ariſing from ſo extraordinary an adventure, as he eſteemed the finding two perſons whom his imagination continually repreſented as the divinities preſiding over that charming country, that he had not been able to compoſe himſelf to reſt: adding, that, at the dawn of day, he aroſe to admire new wonders, which he muſt call ſo valuable a collection of books, whoſe merit made up for the ſmallneſs of their number; but more ſtill the extracts from and the obſervations upon them, which he imagined were done by me, from ſome little corrections in another fine hand, which ſeemed to have been the model of that wherein thoſe tranſcripts and obſervations were written. The confuſion this gave me ſeverely puniſhed my negligence, in not having removed my miſerable performances into another room. He ſoon made us underſtand, by ſome polite compliments, that he had examined into all the papers; among which were many ſhort eſſays on ſubjects my aunt had given me as exerciſes for my underſtanding, and ſeveral things of that ſort, which had ſerved as a profitable employment, or an amuſement for our leiſure hours.

His lordſhip deſired we would permit him to accompany us in the buſineſs which called for our attendance at that time. He went with us to our goats, our poultry, and through all our domeſtick cares. We then ſhewed him our garden, grove, &c. The elegance and order with which they were diſpoſed, charmed him as much as the ingenuity that adorned them. The ſeats, the bowers, the ruſtick ornaments at the outſide of the houſe, excited his admiration. At our return, he begged leave to ſtay with us till the next day, that he might have time to come a little to his ſenſes; for that he could ſcarcely believe all he had ſeen was any thing but enchantment.

My

My aunt had preſerved ſo much of her reſentment againſt the ſex, and was ſo greatly alarmed at every hour I ſpent with one ſo amiable, that he could obtain no other permiſſion than what he might gather from her ſilence. He put his own conſtruction upon it, and then acted accordingly. My baſhfulneſs wearing off by degrees, during the courſe of that day, I got courage to join in the converſation; and muſt confeſs, I never thought the gift of ſpeech, peculiarly beſtowed on man, ſo great a bleſſing. My aunt, notwithſtanding all her prejudices, I could ſee was pleaſed with our gueſt; his juſtneſs of thought, his elegance of expreſſion, and the livelineſs of his imagination, afforded us the higheſt entertainment. I have ſince been told, that my aunt would not ſuffer him to ſtay, but on condition that he ſhould ſay nothing which might tend to leſſen my ignorant ſimplicity, having taken an opportunity, upon my leaving the room, of acquainting him with her reaſons for bringing me up in a happy ignorance of evil, which ſhe hoped would never be diſpelled. He then repreſented to her the impoſſibility of my continuing my whole life in that ſolitude, unleſs, contrary to the courſe of nature, I ſhould die before her; urged the cruelty of ſecluding me from the pleaſures I might enjoy, and from the univerſal adoration to which my perſon, he was pleaſed to ſay, entitled me; and, to ſtrengthen his arguments, offered my aunt any aſſiſtance of fortune, if want of it had been her inducement for flying from mankind. She replied, that was a generoſity for which ſuch ſimplicity as mine might thank him, but a perſon as well acquainted with the world as herſelf, would doubt what gratitude it deſerved, but muſt refuſe it without heſitation. Of this converſation I could not then have the leaſt ſuſpicion; and ſo well did he obey the inſtructions he had received, that I got no knowledge, though much amuſement, by his ſtay with us. At night he again took up with his couch; and if the dejection which appeared in his countenance the next day might be believed, he had not enjoyed more reſt on it than the night before; but finding it improper to intrude himſelf any longer upon us, about noon he took his leave, which he often attempted before he could execute; and, at laſt, he could not do it without the greateſt appearance of force on his inclinations. At parting, he laid aſide his fear of my aunt's anger, and took ſo tender a farewel of me, mixing ſuch very high flattery with his affectionate expreſſions, as then rendered me incapable of returning any anſwer; and now prevents my repeating them. While he regretted being obliged to bid me eternally adieu, a few tears ſtole down his face, and melted me ſo much, that I was almoſt ready to accompany them with ſome of mine. He looked back, till diſtance depriving us of each other's ſight, I grew penſive; and I remember my aunt ſeemed diſturbed at it. She endeavoured to amuſe my thoughts; but they were entirely engroſſed by the ſtranger. Whatever ſubject ſhe began, the converſation was immediately turned to him. I own my former amuſements became leſs pleaſing to me; I found leſs attention to what I read, leſs joy in the vernal beauties which before delighted me, and innocently told my aunt the change I felt; who, with a melancholy, though a gentle forgiving air, ſaid, ſhe perceived her company was not ſo ſufficient to my happineſs, as mine was to her's.

This kind reproach had the deſigned effect: it firſt rendered me ſilent on the ſubject; and, making me think myſelf ungrateful in not returning an equal affection, I took my heart ſo ſeverely to taſk, that I conquered, or thought I had conquered, this ſudden attachment, and was reſtored to my tranquillity, enjoying all the charms of our ſolitude, in leſs than two months after Lord Dorcheſter's departure. This victory was uſeleſs; for my deſtiny had decreed that I ſhould not abide there much longer.

CHAP. V.

ON the evening of a very hot day, I accompanied my aunt to a ſeat we had placed under the ſpreading ſhade of a venerable oak. The freſhneſs of the air made us unwilling to leave it; and, with no other light than what the twinkling ſtars afforded us, we ſat ſinging of hymns, inſpired by true gratitude for the bleſſings we enjoyed; when ſuddenly we were ſurprized with the ſound of the trampling of horſes. My aunt immediately ſhrieked out, caught my hand, and we were running with our utmoſt ſpeed to our cottage, when I felt ſome one ſeize me, but it was too dark to diſtinguiſh the face of the perſon. My poor aunt kept

faſt hold of me; begged, entreated, and uſed every argument to prevail on him to let me go; we both kneeled to him, ſhe beſeeching his compaſſion, I joining in the ſuppliant poſture; but more affrighted with the terror in which I ſaw her, than with any danger I could apprehend, had not power to ſpeak; and was greatly ſurprized to hear her addreſs him as our late gueſt, reproaching him with cruelty, ingratitude, and the greateſt breach of hoſpitality, in thus returning the reception we had given him. I could not imagine how ſhe could ſuſpect him of an action that deſerved ſuch imputations; I thought it impoſſible he ſhould be guilty of any bad thing, or that he who ſeemed to have conceived a greater affection for me than I could account for, in ſo ſhort a time, ſhould wiſh to do me ſo irreparable an injury, as ſeparating me from my beloved and tender aunt, which I now found was the intention of the perſon who held me. She has ſince ſaid that ſhe perceived Lord Dorcheſter's paſſion for me to be ſo violent, that from the time of his departure, ſhe had been apprehenſive of ſome ill effects from it, and had never got a dread off her ſpirits: this made her immediately attribute the preſent attempt to him. But how could I, ignorant of the force of an unruly paſſion, ſuſpect it! My aunt's reſiſtance and mine no longer availed than till another perſon came up, who forced her to let me go; and, notwithſtanding the exclamations of fear and diſtreſs which we both uttered, one of them took me in his arms, and ſetting me before him on horſeback, rode away as faſt as the intricacy of the way would permit him.

At firſt my terror rendered me almoſt ſenſeleſs; I was frighted without knowing what I feared. I had, indeed, read of murders; but then ambition had been the inducement. What had I to tempt any one to rob me of my life? Such wickedneſs could not be perpetrated without temptation or reſentment. My life had injured no one, nor could my death be of any benefit to them; therefore I could not apprehend being murdered: but my ignorance of the nature of the dangers which threatened me, gave no eaſe to my mind. A panick is ſtronger than a reaſonable fear; and ſuch mine was. After a time, grief ſucceeded to terror, and then I found ſome relief from tears. The misfortune of being ſeparated from my beloved aunt, of loſing the pleaſures of her ſweet indulgence and tender affection, was more than my heart had fortitude to ſupport; and how was my affliction embittered, when I reflected on what ſhe would ſuffer, deprived of her only companion, the object of her love and care; and anxious for the fate of all that was dear to her on earth! I wept her ſorrow, I wept my own unhappy fate, in an exceſs ſo ſuitable to the occaſion, that when day-light diſpelled a little of the terrors of my ſituation, I was ſcarcely able to receive any advantage from it, being almoſt blinded with my tears: and it was more from the ſound of a voice once ſo pleaſing to me, than from any diſtinction my eyes could make, that I perceived I was accoſted by Lord Dorcheſter, who addreſſed me with every expreſſion of kindneſs and humility. The harſh notes of a croaking raven could not have been ſo grating to my ears, as the voice I before thought ſo harmonious.

I could not but greatly have reſented the injury done me, had it been by a perfect ſtranger; but my anger was much encreaſed, when I found the injurer was one who had worn the maſk of a peculiar regard. Hypocriſy was a crime of which I had never heard: this was my firſt acquaintance with deceit; and hatred ſprung up with it.

I was angry with myſelf for having ever conceived a favourable impreſſion of ſuch a wretch; and although this was, I believe, the firſt paſſion I had ever been in, it had none of the weakneſs of a new emotion. A perſon bred up in the continual exerciſe of her rage could not have expreſſed herſelf more ſtrongly than I did to his lordſhip, who endeavoured to ſoothe and pacify me; and he ſo far ſucceeded, that I loſt all utterance, from the violence of my tears. He ſeemed to feel my ſorrow, and wept with me. I then hoped compaſſion had melted him, and ſeized the favourable moment, as I thought it, to prevail on him to reſtore me to my afflicted aunt. It appeared to me impoſſible, that a heart where pity had ever dwelt, could refuſe my requeſt: the ardent deſire of obtaining it, the exceſs of my ſorrow and deſpair, made me eloquent; I beſeeched, as a favour, what without the higheſt cruelty and injuſtice could not be denied me, and all the reſentment of an injured perſon was loſt in the humility of the afflicted ſuppliant.

I painted my wretchedneſs in ſuch ſtrong colours, that I at laſt became dumb with

with horror at the melancholy proſpect; but yet, ſo little did it avail, that I could not obtain one flattering hope of being carried back. I could perceive he was extremely agitated, which made me continue my entreaties as long as I was able; but when I ſtopped, I learned the little ſucceſs they had, by his crying out—'Oh! my faireſt, my lovely Ophelia! ceaſe to diſtreſs the fondeſt heart that ever was contained in a human breaſt, by aſking what it muſt refuſe you. With what joy could I comply with any requeſt that did not deprive me of you! Aſk my fortune, my life, any thing but yourſelf, and it ſhall be your's. Could I have ſupported life without you, I would have forborne this violence. Your happineſs ſhall be all my care, believe me, my deareſt angel: though your preſence is more neceſſary to my exiſtence than the light of the ſun, yet would I reſtore you to your aunt, was I not ſure that in a little time you will confeſs yourſelf happier with me than in the dull ſolitude from whence I have brought you, to introduce you into a variety of lively and enchanting pleaſures.'

'I know not your pleaſures nor your cuſtoms,' I anſwered: 'in my little cottage were all my deſires gratified; and can I think that man wiſhes me happy, who tears me from every joy on earth! My dear aunt's tender goodneſs, and faithful friendſhip, is a bleſſing nothing can equal, You would perſuade me that you have ſome affection for me. Are the greateſt injuries proofs of love? Does your affection lead you to afflict the object of it? When you reſtore me to my cottage, I will believe I am not hateful to you: this is the only way you can convince me. If my heart was capable of feeling hatred, I could not wiſh to torment the object of it; nay, even you, whom I deteſt, I would ſooner defend from pain than inflict it, had I the power over you which you have unjuſtly aſſumed over me: can you be ſo different, then, as to wiſh me miſerable, who never offended you—who would not, if I could?'

My tears would not ſuffer me to proceed; nor could Lord Dorcheſter's kindeſt aſſurances, and moſt ardent vows, afford me the leaſt conſolation. After travelling half the day in this uneaſy manner, we came to a beaten road, where there ſtood a ſmall hut, as I thought, with two horſes faſtened to it: into this they put me. I had obſerved, that the outſide was fine and gay; very different from the little hovels I had ſeen: the inſide likewiſe was neat and pretty, but ſeemed better calculated for beauty than convenience; for there was but juſt room for us to ſit. I did not envy the owner his gaudy habitation, which I imagined muſt be very uncomfortable to live in; when to my great amazement I felt it move very ſwiftly. My fright would have proved very dangerous to me, had not Lord Dorcheſter's care prevented the effects of it; for the exceſs of my ſurprize and fear made me attempt to get out at the window; but his lordſhip held me faſt, till he reaſoned me into compoſure on that account, explaining the ſtructure and deſign of ſuch vehicles, as well as their ſafety. Though my body had ſuffered too much from the agitation of my mind, to feel eaſe from any thing at that time, yet I ſoon after grew perfectly well reconciled to this moſt agreeable invention of the luxurious. I did not immediately proceed far in it; for at night, my lord found me ſo much diſordered, that he declared he would remain at the cottage, where, for want of better accommodation, we were obliged to ſtop, till I ſhould be more able to proſecute my journey.

CHAP. VI.

THE day after our arrival at the cottage, inſtead of being refreſhed, I appeared in a high fever, which in a few days increaſed to ſo great a degree, as made me expect from the quiet hand of death a releaſe from all my troubles. I was too unhappy to be afflicted at this expectation. Grief for what I had loſt, and fear for what might enſue, fortified my mind. Can the wretched behold the grave with terror? that eternal ſleep from which no worldly troubles can awaken them! that ſecure aſylum from the injuries of man, and the frailty of their own nature! In this pleaſing light I then beheld it. Lord Dorcheſter was differently affected: he ſeemed to ſuffer from anxiety more than I did from ſickneſs. He was ſcarcely ever out of my chamber, and attended me with a watchful care, a tender attention, which appeared far above the honeſt good-natured humanity of the poor cottager's wife. If I was worſe than common, it was more viſible in his countenance than in mine. One would have thought his exiſtence de-

pended on my life. The leaſt amendment in me raiſed him from a deſpair, which again returned when the favourable ſymptoms vaniſhed. Conſcious that the ſeat of my diſtemper was in my mind, he endeavoured to calm my ſpirits, by promiſing that, if after a year's ſtay in England, I ſtill preferred my little ſolitude, he would reſtore me to the aunt whoſe loſs I lamented. I thought myſelf ſo certain of a ſpeedy releaſe from a world with which my firſt affliction had diſguſted me, as is common in the petulant impatience of youth yet unbroken by the reverſes of fortune, that I believed this conſolation came too late; and relieved from my fears, by my expectation of an approaching end, I grew more eaſy, and had leiſure to attend to the apparent ſigns of Lord Dorcheſter's tender anxiety. Though I could not comprehend how a ſtrong affection ſhould grow in ſo ſhort a time, nor how ſuch cruel effects could be produced by love, yet I began to feel ſome compaſſion for his affliction: I ſaw him ſuffer ſo much, that I almoſt forgot he had been the occaſion of my diſtreſs. Even my reſentment was weakened by ſickneſs. My moſt turbulent paſſions ſeemed buried in the grave before me. His ſorrow, his paſſionate lamentations, his tender agonies, and bitter remorſe, melted a heart ſoftened by the general decay of nature; and, believing my own pains near their end, I pitied his, which appeared then more acute, and likely to be more laſting. Every look, every word and action, expreſſed his love in ſuch legible characters, that I ſometimes was ready to believe his profeſſions, though I thought his affection muſt be of a ſtrange contradictory nature. But if all his care and tenderneſs only proceeded from a return to humanity, of which his firſt action declared him at that time void, I could not help owning to myſelf I never before ſaw that virtue appear ſo very amiable. A fortnight paſſed before my fever began to abate; and it left me ſo very weak and low, that I thought myſelf neareſt death when I really was out of all danger of dying. Above a month more was ſpent in reſtoring me to ſufficient health and ſpirits to proceed on my journey by gentle ſtages. The natural ſtrength of my ſpirits and nerves, which had then never felt any of the diſorders that in a degree afflict almoſt every conſtitution in this country, and by which even mine has ſuffered, ſince, returning, I bade adieu to my native ſimplicity of life. Theſe natural ſpirits, with the turn of thoughts my ſickneſs had given, as I have already mentioned, which had rendered me liable to receive tender impreſſions from my lord's affectionate attentions, together with his promiſe of ſuffering me to return to my cottage in a ſtated time, (for I could not doubt but I ſhould chuſe to do ſo) greatly abated my affliction, and I became capable of converſing with tolerable eaſe, though my heart was ſtill oppreſſed with ſorrow.

The evening of the day we left the cottage was come, before we ſaw any houſe of more noble ſtructure than that which had laſt harboured us. The firſt we drove by appeared to me a moſt ſtupendous building, though I have ſince learned it was but a moderate-ſized houſe; and before night we ſtopped at what I thought a ſumptuous palace. The hoſpitality of the inhabitants charmed me; they received us at their door, and pleaſure ſat on their countenances; all their words expreſſed a deſire of accommodating us agreeably: I could even have found fault with the impetuoſity of their good-will, had not the motive to which I attributed it excuſed, I might almoſt ſay endeared, the inconveniences it occaſioned. The ſize and colour of the maſter and miſtreſs of the houſe made me tremble for the ſlenderneſs of my waiſt and fairneſs of my ſkin, in a country which ſeemed ſo great an enemy to the ſhape and complexion; but, before the end of my journey, my vanity was pacified, by obſerving that this extraordinary bulk and redneſs of face was almoſt peculiar to perſons in their way of life.

I admired no part of our hoſts obliging behaviour more than their leaving us as ſoon as we were ſeated. I felt myſelf too fatigued to make all the returns my gratitude ſuggeſted, and I imagine they left me to ſeek ſome repoſe from ſilence. Supper was ſoon after brought in; and the maſter of the houſe followed, enquiring if we were ſerved as we choſe. I got up, and brought him a chair, making room for him to ſit down; and was ſhocked to ſee Lord Dorcheſter endeavouring to hide a ſmile, but giving the old gentleman no encouragement to make uſe of the ſeat I had placed for him; who, with a humility which hurt me, inſiſted on waiting behind my chair. This made me extremely uneaſy, and I

was

was aſtoniſhed that my lord would ſuffer it.

When our hoſt and ſupper were both withdrawn, I could not forbear expreſſing my approbation of his indefatigable hoſpitality, in ſacrificing the eaſe and quiet of his life to the convenience of others, for I found we were not the only gueſts; and touched a little on the outward civility I thought due to him whoſe kind reception entitled him to our eſteem and gratitude. I began to find my apprehenſions a little relieved, by ſeeing there was ſo much benevolence to be found in a people among whom I had been ſo forcibly introduced. Lord Dorcheſter ſoon put an end to this pleaſing imagination, by telling me, that the reception I admired was the effect of their covetouſneſs, not their generoſity; and that their hoſpitality was a mere trade, by which they gained a ſubſiſtence; and practiſed by none in this country from other motives. I at firſt exclaimed againſt the general brutality; but recollecting that my firſt, and hitherto only, misfortune in life, had been brought upon me by our not acting with the ſame churliſhneſs, I told my lord I was leſs ſurprized ſince I heard this, that he had not learnt how to make a proper return to a virtue ſo unknown to him as hoſpitality; and which I ſuppoſed had been baniſhed the kingdom, from ſome ſuch ill conſequences ariſing from it as I had experienced.

Fatigue, and the relief my ſpirits began to feel from the diſſipation of my mind by all the novelty which ſurrounded me, made me inclinable to reſt pretty early. Lord Dorcheſter, ſtudious to oblige me, and endeavouring to prevent my uttering a wiſh by his great readineſs to comply with it before I had time to expreſs it but by my eyes, took leave of me, ſaying, that though he could converſe with and look on me for ever, yet he had rather put a force on his inclinations than lay any reſtraint on mine; and, after aſking my permiſſion, kiſſed my hand with more pleaſure than I imagined it could beſtow. Becauſe he was pleaſed, I was aſhamed: I know no other reaſon for my bluſhes; for it before appeared to me too inſignificant to raiſe any. He then bid me a good night, and left me to take ſome reſt, as I ſhall your ladyſhip, bidding you adieu for a little time.

CHAP. VII.

THOUGH the relation of a journey is often more tedious than the journey itſelf, yet I will ſuppoſe your ladyſhip's mental fatigue to have been of no longer duration than my bodily wearineſs, and that, after a ſhort reſt, you are ready to proceed with me on my journey. My aunt had accuſtomed me to great ſimplicity of dreſs; I ſuppoſe foreſeeing the inconvenience ſhe ſhould find in ſupplying us with that train of variety uſed by people who live in the world. I had never worn any thing round my waiſt but thin waiſtcoats, nor any cap in the day-time. My hair was extremely long, and curled naturally, (for I knew no art) and fell in ringlets about my neck, reaching behind below the middle of my waiſt, and in ſome places encroaching on my forehead enough to ſet off my complexion by the contraſt without hiding the ſhape of it. This peculiarity of dreſs, your ladyſhip may eaſily imagine, fixed the obſervation of all who ſaw me: I ſoon became ſenſible of the occaſion of the exceſſive gazing ſo very painful to me, though accompanied by expreſſions of admiration, even to exclamations of aſtoniſhment: ſo fond are people of novelty; to which, no doubt, I owed the greateſt part of the compliments paid me. I begged Lord Dorcheſter to procure me a proper head-dreſs, with which he unwillingly complied; ſo that, before the end of my journey, I made a decent and common appearance.

Though I was amuſed by the novelty of the objects which paſſed before me in ſo quick a ſucceſſion, and by Lord Dorcheſter's lively and entertaining converſation, yet I was not ſorry when he told me that our journey was at an end, and that the houſe to which we drove, through a long and very wide avenue of venerable oaks, was his own, and the place where our travelling was to ceaſe. The magnificence of the building firſt ſtruck my eye; but, when I entered it, the elegance of the furniture pleaſed me ſtill more. The carving and the pictures charmed me; the country repreſented in theſe appeared more enchanting than nature itſelf, as the painter's imagination aſſembles beauties in reality never found together. My raptures were not ſilent; my admiration broke forth into

into exclamations. I ran from one room to another, deſirous of ſeeing more, though not weary of what I had ſeen. Lord Dorcheſter with difficulty prevailed with me to go with him into the garden, before the ſun ceaſed to gild the proſpect. I was unwilling to leave a houſe which preſented ſuch various beauties to my eyes; but I could not regret it, when he led me to a terrace, beneath which runs a rapid river of a conſiderable breadth. On one ſide it commands a very extenſive and beautiful proſpect, on the other is the river; the banks beyond which are very high, and covered with a hanging wood, ornamented with ſome fine buildings moſt judiciouſly placed.

From this end of the terrace, we entered into a wood cut into various walks, all terminated with fine views, or ſome agreeable objects; and many of them opening in different parts, to let in either proſpects of the country or views of the river, which runs through part of the wood with great rapidity, falling down a rock of a conſiderable height at the end of one of the walks. A little beyond this caſcade, it is hid from ſight for ſome diſtance; and when it again appears, it's form is much altered; for it is deep, and yet ſo clear, that one plainly diſcovers every pebble at the bottom, it's ſurface being as ſmooth as glaſs. In this wood, likewiſe, are many buildings moſt advantageouſly placed.

The garden is divided from the park only by a Ha-ha; unaccuſtomed to which deception, I thought there was no ſeparation, till on the brink of it. The eagerneſs of an enraptured fancy, charmed with all the beauties around me, made me long to paſs theſe boundaries; but the evening was ſo far advanced, I was obliged to defer this gratification till the next day, and only to admire at a diſtance the mixture of fine lawns and venerable groves, verdant vallies and wooded hills. The extent of it is conſiderable; and the variety of grounds gives it an air of wildneſs, which greatly charms in the midſt of a country ſo diligently cultivated, that one expects to ſee there more of the beauties of art than of nature.

When night obliged me to return to the houſe, Lord Dorcheſter conducted me to an apartment deſigned for me. The bed-chamber was elegantly furniſhed: but the dreſſing-room moſt ſurprized me; it contained ſo many things that were new to me, that I could ſcarcely gueſs their uſe. The ornaments and the toilette engaged my affections for ſome time; though had I been more accuſtomed to ſuch things, I ſhould have been more ſenſible of the richneſs and elegance of them. Every thing in the room had it's ſhare of my admiration; but, after the momentary wonder was paſſed, all theſe nice efforts of the arts of the ingenious fell far ſhort of my eſtimation of the beauties I beheld from the windows, under which were parterres of the fineſt flowers, mixed with the moſt fragrant ſhrubs; and beyond them the river, the wood, and the park. When every thing elſe had paſſed my examination, Lord Dorcheſter opened ſome drawers, and ſhewed me that they were filled with linen, cloaths, and trinkets, ſuch as are cuſtomary in this country. Having never had a notion of any thing in dreſs beyond neatneſs and cleanlineſs, in the homelieſt garb, I could not help being ſtruck at the reſplendency of all the ornaments I beheld. The fineneſs of the linen I thought curious, but the laces aſtoniſhed me; they appeared to me of a delicacy beyond human workmanſhip. Had I been at liberty to have indulged my vanity, I ſhould that moment have tried the effect of which things I imagined muſt prove ſo ornamental. But my lord's preſence awed me; and being told that ſupper was on the table, I was obliged to accompany him to another room; where we ſpent the remainder of the evening, till the hour of repoſe parted us.

CHAP. VIII.

That night experienced what people who live in grandeur often find, that pomp will not give tranquillity, which alone diſpenſes quiet reſt. The agitation of my mind allowed me very little ſleep. I had too much matter for reflection, from Lord Dorcheſter's reſpectful and affectionate behaviour; which I could by no means think my due, from my enforced ſeparation from my aunt, and my former habitation; dragged into a new world, wholly ignorant of the reaſons of my being ſo, or the conſequences of it; and from the pleaſure I had conceived at the ſight of every thing now offered to my enjoyment; which my lord even aſſured me was my property,

perty, affirming all I beheld was my own: a gift I could not ſuppoſe real; as the little I ſaw of the Engliſh in my journey gave me no reaſon to believe them ſo generous and diſintereſted as to make ſuch preſents. In reflecting on theſe ſubjects I paſſed my night, and had ſome moments of pleaſure mixed with my grief: but they bore little proportion with each other; my ſorrow ſeemed deeply rooted, though it's violence was abated; while the contrary ſenſation appeared only a ſudden flutter, which played round my head, but came not near my heart, and would not admit of reflection: however, I found it ſo comfortable a reſource, that I endeavoured to encourage it, and, prompted by curioſity, at break of day I aroſe to examine more minutely the things which had ſo charmed me the night before. If I believed any one was ever formed without vanity, I might be fearful of expoſing myſelf by confeſſing mine; but I may hope to meet with indulgence from one of my own ſex, who will candidly imagine herſelf in my place: by her my youth may be received as ſome excuſe; and if I am convicted of having had more than a common ſhare, may I not alſo claim ſome title to unuſual ſincerity in giving room for the accuſation, and hope that virtue may obtain a pardon for my frailty? I ſearched every drawer; and, after admiring the things they contained, felt a deſire to try the effects of this profuſion of ornaments. The night-gowns and common undreſſes were grown familiar to me during my long journey; therefore I laid them aſide, as not exciting my curioſity, and ſelected the moſt reſplendent part of my apparel and trinkets.

For my firſt trial, I choſe a white luteſtring gown and petticoat, flounced with pink and ſilver gauze, each flounce edged with a pink and ſilver fringe. I wove flowers and jewels in with my hair, letting the ringlets fall down my back, which I had lately confined under a cap. I put a ſmall garland of the flowers and jewels round my head, and a larger acroſs my waiſt and neck, paſſing it over my ſhoulder on one ſide, and fixing it to the bottom of my waiſt on the other. I omitted nothing which I thought could adorn my face and perſon, and put on every ornament that I could contrive to place becomingly. Finding my gown too long without a hoop, I put on the ſmalleſt as a neceſſary diſtortion, not as a pretty part of dreſs; but immediately threw away the ſtiff ſtays, which ſeemed to me invented in perverſe oppoſition to Nature, and one of the proofs with which I thought this country abounded, that man in his folly had declared open war with her, and, by pretending to improve, had ſo ſpoiled her works, that ſcarcely any traces of the Divine Artificer remained.

Thus equipped, the employment of ſome hours, I was ſo engaged in admiring my ſweet perſon in the looking-glaſs, doing honour to every beauty I could diſcover, and making myſelf full amends for the trouble I had taken by the ſatisfaction with which I beheld the effects of it, that I did not perceive Lord Dorcheſter, who paſſed by my window, and ſeeing me, your ladyſhip will eaſily imagine, was tempted to take a nearer view of ſo diverting a figure. He came into my room without my perceiving him. When he entered the chamber, he was beginning to excuſe his coming in ſo abruptly; but, on my turning round, ſurprized to hear his voice, and aſhamed at being thus caught in the ridiculous indulgence of my vanity, he was ſtruck ſilent, perhaps more from wonder at my folly, than, as he pretended, from admiration at ſeeing me ſo much ſurpaſs myſelf, thus attired; having before, he ſaid, thought me beyond the poſſibility of improvement. I was ſenſible of the flattery couched in this ſpeech; for, with all my partiality to myſelf, I could not believe I had beauty to ſurprize, though I fancied I had enough to pleaſe. He laviſhed every expreſſion that could ſhew me how much he was delighted with my perſon. My complexion, my eyes, my hair, every feature, received new praiſes; my air and ſhape were not paſſed over in ſilence. He kiſſed my hands a thouſand times, and would not part with them out of his. Surely no eyes ever expreſſed ſuch a mixture of tenderneſs and admiration; every look increaſed my confuſion: his behaviour put me more out of countenance than the reflection of having been found ſo fooliſhly employed.

I believe it was near two hours before I could prevail on Lord Dorcheſter to ceaſe his flattery, or to take his eyes off me; till at laſt I was reduced to tell him, that I ſhould be glad to be left to undreſs, for that I was very hungry, and wanted my breakfaſt, but could not appear before his ſervants thus apparelled.

He

He ſtarted at my ſaying this, and cried out—How happy are you, Ophelia, 'in that inſenſibility of heart which ſuf-'fers you to think of ſuch trifles! but 'how miſerable does it make me!' I, who thought breakfaſt a ſerious conſideration, was ſurprized to find him ſo hurt at my mentioning it; and told him, that I could not comprehend how it ſhould either excite envy or diſtreſs: but, as he begged I would not undreſs till after breakfaſt, on which conſideration he would himſelf bring it into my dreſſing-room, to humour my deſire of not being ſeen, I complied, glad to reconcile a difference of inclination to which ſo ſerious an air had been given.

My lord immediately kept his word; but, during the whole time, his thoughts and eyes were ſo fixed on me, that he did not well know what he did. He ſcalded his fingers, ſpilled his tea, let fall his bread and butter; and, in ſhort, made ſuch a confuſion, that I could not forbear laughing, though I had endeavoured it to the utmoſt of my power. He at firſt bluſhed and ſighed; but at laſt joined with me, and complimented me in ridiculing himſelf.

It was almoſt dinner time before I could prevail on my lord to leave me, to put on cloaths more proper for common wear; which at laſt he did, I dare ſay not a little pleaſed at finding that what he muſt have deſigned for captivating a childiſh fancy, and corrupting by glaring follies a mind bred in ſimplicity and reaſon, had ſucceeded ſo well.

The remainder of this day, and the next, were ſpent in ſeeing Lord Dorcheſter's park; the extent of it, and the variety it contained, made it a full employ for that time.

Two days more paſſed in ſeeing ſome neighbouring places; which were fine enough to merit attention, though by no means equal in beauty or magnificence to my lord's. In this time I had ſome opportunities of obſerving inſtances of his humanity and good-nature; which contributed more towards abating my fears, than his continual endeavours to amuſe me, to obtain my pardon, and merit my affection.

I could not believe that he had torn me from calm happineſs, for the chance of making me happier, as he pretended: what he had done, was a myſtery hitherto to me inexplicable; but I hoped the man who could be humane and kind to others, would not be cruel to one who had the greateſt tie on his generoſity, that of being within his power unfriended and defenceleſs. Encouraged by this hope I became able to converſe with eaſe, and ceaſed reproaches, which might exaſperate; but I had, by melancholy experience, found were unavailing.

CHAP. IX.

THE ſecond Sunday after our arrival at this houſe, Lord Dorcheſter propoſed my accompanying him to church; to which I readily conſented, though I had been taught to look on all ſpace as the temple of the great Creator; yet my aunt had informed me, that in populous places there were edifices erected for publick worſhip. When the ſervice was ended, we walked over it. The building is pretty; but then appeared to me too much calculated to pleaſe the eye, and to fix the thoughts on the arts of men's hands, to be a proper place for divine worſhip; where the ſuppliant ſoul ſhould be entirely filled with adoration of the Supreme Being to which it is dedicated. The little fabricks the church contained, by the beauty of the marble, and of the carving, pleaſed me greatly, as objects, but not as ornaments, for ſuch a place; till my lord told me their ſolemn purpoſe, informing me that they were erected to the memory of his anceſtors.

This made me more particularly obſerve them, and I was ſoon deeply engaged in reading the characters which I found engraven on them. This peruſal filled me with admiration; ſuch exalted virtue as by theſe teſtimonies I underſtood had deſcended through ſeveral generations, was a pleaſing ſubject for contemplation. The little time I had been in the inhabited part of this kingdom had taught me that ſuch merit was not univerſal. My heart was filled with a reſpect approaching to adoration, at thinking I trod on ground ſanctified, by being the repoſitory of the ſacred remains of ſuch god-like men. I could not forbear addreſſing their departed ſouls with a zeal and reverence little ſhort of worſhip; and praying for the influence of their great examples, towards enabling me to imitate their virtues.

Lord Dorcheſter cruelly broke in upon ſo pleaſing a rapture, telling me that I gave too eaſy faith to the words of man. 'Though theſe are my anceſtors,' ſaid he,

he, 'I muſt confeſs few of them had any 'of the qualities here aſcribed to them. 'I might have ſuffered you, my dear 'Ophelia, to have continued in your 'miſtake, as it would, perhaps, have 'given you more favourable thoughts 'of the deſcendant from ſuch worthies, 'had I not found myſelf envious of the 'great ſhare of your eſteem, which by 'theſe falſe characters they had gained. 'Envy makes me tell you, that epitaphs 'are formed on ideal characters: the 'writer collects together all the virtues, 'graces, and accompliſhments, that are 'ſcattered among mankind; and when 'theſe are all blended together with all 'the elegance he is maſter of, he applies 'them to any one who, at his death, wants 'that memorial of his goodneſs which 'his life has not teſtified. To him whoſe 'actions have raiſed no character, a tomb 'is erected, to bear on it that which an 'epitaph can give him. Reſemblance is 'never thought of: if the deceaſed has 'not one of the qualities deſcribed, it 'ſerves the purpoſe juſt as well.'

I was, indeed, inclined to ſuſpect my lord of envy; I could ſcarcely believe what he ſaid: but when he convinced me of the truth of this account, I ſincerely reſented the pollution of theſe innocent aſhes, in being made ſubjects of ſuch falſehoods; and pitied the pure marble, for having it's fair outſide defiled by ſuch foul lyes. But what made this practice appear ſtill more ridiculous to me, was Lord Dorcheſter's adding, that this was now ſo commonly known, that no one gave the leaſt faith to theſe monumental inſcriptions: that it ſhould have loſt it's uſe, and yet be continued, increaſed my wonder. My lord likewiſe told me, that many people left directions concerning their monuments. It is not ſtrange if this appeared ridiculous to me then, ſince uſe has not yet taught me to ſee it in any other light, nor made me ceaſe to wonder that it ſhould ſhare the dying thoughts of people who, I ſhould imagine, muſt all have ſomething to leave behind more worthy their care; and ſomething to expect more deſerving their attention than their own miſerable carcaſes.

I was not without ſelf-love; but had no notion that it could extend to the duſt into which we were to moulder, and make us deſirous to fix our claim to every particular particle.

Though I had not, till Lord Dorcheſter broke in upon my ſolitude, ever received a grain of flattery; yet mere nature and conſtitution had given me a little vanity, without the benefit of compariſon. Unable to ſoothe my fancy with excelling multitudes, ſince I had never beheld them, yet in a degree I was vain: Nature alone ſuffices to make us ſo. But this kind of poſthumous vanity was far above my ſimple conception; and I complimented myſelf on my humility, in being only reaſonably fond of a living form of delicate and curious compoſition, abſolutely indifferent to any poor remains after delicacy of complexion, ſymmetry of features, and elegant proportion of body, that ſhall be confounded together in one little heap of duſt.

Lord Dorcheſter, to ſave his anceſtors from my partial cenſure, led me into the church-yard; where he ſhewed me that the folly was univerſal, and that the poor were as tenacious of the little ſpot to which, after death, they are conſigned, as thoſe who aſſert their title to it by nobler ſtructures. I confeſs, I was ſhocked at this diſtinction of ranks; and to find that here the rich and the poor do *not* lie down together. This cuſtom ſeemed to me to deſtroy the equality of the grave, which ends greater contentions than thoſe of precedency.

Upon reading the epitaphs of the meaner ſort, I found their vanity was often confined within the narrow bounds of having lived and died: they were little more than certificates of their former exiſtence, proud to aſſert their having been of the human ſpecies; for many of their wooden monuments, more periſhable than themſelves, bear no other inſcription than the date of their birth and death.

Though I was greatly diſguſted with theſe proofs of the folly of mankind, yet, at this time, the living were more diſagreeable to me than the dead. I liked better to be an obſerver, than the ſubject of obſervation. Though in my dreſs I had conformed to the cuſtoms of the place to the utmoſt of my power, yet there certainly was a ſtrangeneſs in my look or air that drew all eyes upon me, and which for many years did not wear off, while I remained in the country. I attributed it to the curioſity natural to people who ſee few ſtrangers; but after I left it, I found that, by living in a more populous place, I only had more eyes upon me. Curious obſervation fettering the freedom of action, I lived under con-

ſtant and painful reſtraint. My lord endeavoured to make me eaſy by flattery, attributing it to reaſons which might pleaſe my vanity: but though I did due honour to my perſon, yet I could not give him credit; and though I might now the more excuſeably believe it, that I have ſeen the obſervation leſſen as my complexion has decayed, and that fewer eyes have been upon me, ſince the luſtre of mine hath been abated by age; yet am I convinced that the only ſuperiority I had over many, who, while I was preſent, paſſed unregarded, was in the air of a ſtranger to every faſhion which ſhe ſtrove to follow. This gave the charm of novelty to a face and perſon which could boaſt no other excellence above a thouſand others which were leſs obſerved.

I would not have your ladyſhip imagine that I am aiming to be thought humble; I am very ready to allow myſelf all the beauty I am conſcious I poſſeſſed: but faſhion or chance often exalts us above our real charms. If truth did not oblige me to make this confeſſion, I ſhould not venture to ſay it, for fear of being believed; for our ſex are as vain of having been, as of being handſome: and though they, while young, live in juſt terror of the words 'She was,' yet, when that fatal period comes, their vanity retires into it as into a fortreſs; and, ſecure in this ſtrong hold, from which nothing can expel it, it makes little excurſions, and ſupports itſelf with the booty it obtains. One of our own ſex has told us, with full as much truth as poetry, that—

'Woman-kind's peculiar joys,
'From paſt or preſent beauties riſe.'

How often does a woman's partial report emulate in falſehood the lying epitaphs which ſhocked my innocent ſimplicity! After the ſmall-pox, which frequently is the grave of beauty, how many women have I heard boaſt the charms they never poſſeſſed! And ſoften the mortification of ſeams and ſcars, by praiſing the former clearneſs and ſmoothneſs of their complexions!

But this ſubject has led me from the order which ſhould be kept in a narration: I have wandered from the time to which I had brought my ſtory, and muſt correct my irregularity by returning to it.

CHAP. X.

LORD Dorcheſter's deſire of giving me every pleaſure in his power, led him to make me a preſent of a ſum of money. I would have excuſed myſelf from the acceptance of it, as it appeared to me entirely uſeleſs. Every thing I could want was provided for me; I therefore refuſed an unneceſſary burden: but he inſiſted; and I was obliged to acquieſce.

As I had learned that money was a very neceſſary thing to thoſe who were not ſo amply ſupplied with all it could purchaſe as I was, I thought it a pity it ſhould be ſo ill employed, and determined to diſtribute the ſum, to me ſo uſeleſs, among perſons who were in real want of it. Accordingly, one morning, when buſineſs had called my lord a few miles from home, I walked out, in ſearch of people who might be made happier by thoſe riches which were to me entirely uſeleſs. I entered the firſt cottage I ſaw, and bluntly aſked the inhabitants if they wanted money. They anſwered in the affirmative, with an eagerneſs which perſuaded me they were in extreme indigence. I now began to feel the value of the treaſure before deſpiſed, ſince it could give ſuch true heart-felt joy as I received from being able to relieve wretches, of whoſe former diſtreſs I judged by their preſent extaſies. When I gave ſome guineas to the mother, ſhe appeared quite frantick with delight. Though my raptures were ſilent, yet I could not but think my ſenſations were as ſtrong. I for ſome time indulged myſelf in the contemplation of her joy: but as my ignorance of the cuſtoms of this country, ſo new to me, made me curious, I at laſt put a force on my delighted imaginations, and enquired into the uſe ſhe would make of the money I had given her.

Nothing but a full knowledge of my ignorant ſimplicity can give your ladyſhip a notion of my ſurprize, when I received for anſwer, that ſhe would buy herſelf and children handſome cloaths, keep as good a houſe at the next wake as any woman in the pariſh, and never again work for a neighbouring farmer's wife who was of a meaner birth than herſelf! I was ſhocked to find that I had been contributing to the increaſe of vanity

nity and lazineſs, which muſt have been great before, or the good woman could not have been ſo much overjoyed at obtaining the power of gratifying it. I had no way to ſilence the reproaches of my conſcience but by falſe reaſonings; arguing that, when ſuch unreaſonable deſires are too deeply rooted to be conquered, they deſerve our compaſſion; and that the money was better employed in relieving wants, though they were but imaginary, than in being locked up in my bureau.

A great proof of my ignorance of mankind, was my endeavour to reaſon this woman out of her vanity. Reaſon is too precious a bleſſing to be in the gift of mortals! I could inſtil none into her mind; and was at laſt forced to give up my attempt, finding my arguments had much leſs influence on her than the deſire of exciting the admiration of her neighbours. The diſappointment I met with in this inſtance did not diſcourage me from continuing my courſe. Such vanity of mind appeared to me a monſter in nature: I could not believe the world afforded ſuch another; therefore, fearleſs of meeting the like illſucceſs again, I entered the next poor cottage. I found the man to whom it belonged ſitting in the chimney-corner, with all the marks of ſickneſs and decay in his countenance; his wife induſtriouſly employed, and ſeven children, the eldeſt helping her, the younger part playing about him. I looked ſome time with pleaſure on this little family; for children were ſtill a kind of wonder to me, who had never ſeen any till I was torn from my ſolitude: our own infancy, by the gradual increaſe of years, making little impreſſion on us. I then put the ſame queſtion to theſe cottagers as to the laſt I viſited; but with leſs impetuoſity was anſwered by the ſick man, that, indeed, they were very poor, and muſt have ſtarved, had not his wife been one of the beſt women in the world: for he had been, by ſickneſs, diſabled from working above two months, without money to purchaſe a cure. 'Purchaſe a cure!' I replied, with ſome ſurprize; 'is there any one who is poſſeſſed of the power of curing diſeaſes, 'would require to be paid for it?'

'Alas!' ſaid the man, 'nothing is 'to be had without money: our doctor 'muſt have his fee, or we can have no 'cure.' An accuſation of ſuch inhumanity made me exclaim, with tears in my eyes, againſt this ſecond monſter, which I thought I had diſcovered. I aſked the man, why, in ſuch neceſſity, he had not applied to Lord Dorcheſter. His anſwer was, that my lord's ſteward was his enemy; and therefore he had no hopes of receiving relief from him, as he was aſhamed to ſpeak to my lord himſelf.

I obſerved to him, that every one muſt be well received by my lord, who gave him an opportunity of exerciſing his bounty and humanity; that it could not be in the power of any of his dependants to prevent him from conferring favours on the deſerving, and relieving the diſtreſſed: but that, had an application to his ſteward been neceſſary, whatever offence he might have taken, his anger muſt have vaniſhed at the ſight of ſo much wretchedneſs.

The man ſhook his head, and ſaid—'Ah, Madam! you are very, very 'young; and, I am afraid, too good 'for this world! God grant you may 'not ſoon have reaſon to change your 'opinion of it!'

I did not then underſtand the force of theſe words. I have ſince learned, that they muſt have proceeded from ſurprize at my ignorant belief in the virtue of mankind. When I had given money to theſe people, I enquired into the uſe they would make of it; of which they gave me ſo rational an account, that I doubled the ſum with the greateſt delight imaginable: happy in the amends this made me for the diſappointment I found in the unworthineſs of the laſt perſon to whom I had given ſome part of my burden.

This ſucceſs encouraged me to continue my round.

The next cottage I went into pleaſed me by it's neatneſs. I ſaw only one inhabitant in it: ſhe was a very pretty girl, extremely clean, though as coarſely dreſſed as poſſible; ſhe was buſy in her dairy, and nothing about her wore ſuch ſigns of poverty, as in the other houſes I had been in; however, deſirous to ſee whether the love of money was univerſal, I aſked her whether ſhe wanted any.

The girl, in anſwer, ſaid ſhe could not properly be ſaid to want, ſince her father and ſhe, by induſtry and hard labour, were ſupplied with the neceſſaries of life; but that ſhe confeſſed ſhe wiſhed for money, perhaps as much as the moſt neceſſitous.

This appeared to me a ſymptom of a depraved appetite; but I enquired her reaſon. To which ſhe replied, that all queſtions were not to be anſwered. My curioſity was, perhaps, more prevalent than my compaſſion, when I told her, that if I thought the motive of her wiſhes a good one, I might gratify them.

'If you will buy the ſecret, I am ſure 'you deſerve it,' replied the girl; and then very honeſtly informed me, though not without bluſhes, that a young man in the neighbourhood had loved her from a child, and been equally beloved by her; that they were to have been married by the conſent of both their parents, when, a few days before the appointed time, his father died, and left debts behind him to the value of twenty pounds; an immenſe ſum to a poor labourer. On this account her father withdrew his conſent till ſuch time as the whole ſhould be paid. This was ſuch a ſpur to her lover's induſtry, that he worked far beyond his ſtrength, in order to raiſe the money; and yet it was ſo much to ſave, out of a labourer's ſmall profits, that notwithſtanding his endeavours, it muſt be ſome years before the debt could be paid off. She concluded by telling me, that had ſhe money, ſhe would ſhorten the time of her ſeparation; during which, his affection for her might cool, and the more reaſonably, as he might look on the immoderate fatigue which oppreſſed his mind and overcame his health, as the conſequences of his love for her; and it was grievous to her to have that appear in his eyes as the ſource of any evils.

A few gentle tears trickled down the poor girl's cheeks, while ſhe imparted her apprehenſion, which moved my compaſſion, as well as my reaſon, to a deſire of relieving her. I inſtantly gave her the ſum ſhe wanted, and was over-paid by the delicacy and vivacity of her gratitude, from which I might not immediately have been freed, had not her lover paſſed by the window, bending under a heavy load of corn. This ſight attracted her with all the ſpeed her legs could uſe; and, winged with love, ſhe was with him before I had moved three ſteps from the ſpot where ſhe had left me. I ſtaid a little to ſee the various emotions expreſſed in their countenances; ſhe more delighted to tell than he could be to hear, as the fatigues he had undergone had more afflicted her than him, to whom they were ſweetened by the reward promiſed to their ſucceſs.

When their mutual congratulations were over, I ſaw the young man was accompanying his miſtreſs, as I imagined, to add his grateful acknowledgments to her's; and that they might not have their more pleaſing converſation broke in upon by a return they thought neceſſary, I ſlipt out at another door, and wandered on with the ſame agreeable attention.

I had not gone far, when my compaſſion was excited by the ſight of a hut, whoſe outward appearance bore every ſign of poverty; and when I entered, I found the inſide perfectly correſponded with it. It was one general ſcene of wretchedneſs; the inhabitants were almoſt naked, and ſeemed expiring with hunger.

I was ſo much ſhocked at this ſight, that I could not ſpeak to them, till a few tears had rendered my compaſſion leſs painful. During my ſilence they begged relief, with all the clamour of extreme neceſſity; but could not be more deſirous to receive, than I was to give, which I did liberally, emptying my purſe into the lap of the mother of the family, whom I thought the propereſt treaſurer for the whole.

Without ſtaying to make any acknowledgments, or leaving me time to put my uſual queſtion, the woman ran up ſtairs; upon this a young girl, who ſeemed on the verge of the grave, burſt into tears, and was accompanied in them by all the reſt, except an old man, who ſat by, and appeared inſenſible of all that paſſed.

I aſked the wretched meagre race, what occaſioned this ſudden flow of grief, when I had hoped I had adminiſtered preſent relief to their neceſſities.

The ſickly girl anſwered, that, to relieve them was beyond the power of any being, but Him who could change the heart. 'My mother's avarice,' added ſhe, 'will defeat the kind intentions of 'your bounty: ſhe is not the real parent 'of any of us. My father was eſteemed 'rich for one in his ſtation, which tempted the woman who has juſt been the 'object of your generous pity, to marry 'him, and thereby to reduce us all, who 'were the children of a former wife, to 'the greateſt misfortunes that can ariſe 'from extreme indigence. She is ſo 'very covetous, that ſhe will not afford 'cloathing either for herſelf or us, or give 'us any wholeſome food; the little ſuſtenance we obtain, juſt ſuffices to keep 'us enough alive, to feel the miſeries of 'continual famine. My poor father's

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'underſtanding was impaired by a ſtroke 'of the palſy, in a year after ſhe married 'him, happily loſing thereby the quick 'ſenſe of his misfortunes. Before I was 'brought into ſo very bad a ſtate of 'health, I uſed my utmoſt endeavours to 'prevail on her to let me go to ſervice; 'but the expence of cloathing me that 'was neceſſary, if I had left home, ap-'peared ſo formidable to her, that ſhe 'would never come into it.'

I pitied this wretched family more than ever; and when the woman came down again, I tried all the arguments I could deviſe, to prevail upon her to ſuffer me to have the laying out of part of the money I had given her; but this attempt ſo exaſperated her, that ſhe loaded me with abuſe, and I went away the object of her rage and fury, inſtead of her gratitude; but was fully reſolved to prevail with Lord Dorcheſter to adminiſter relief in a more judicious manner to the reſt of this miſerable family.

CHAP. XI.

I Had now diſburdened myſelf of the riches I had felt an incumbrance, though they were a leſs evil to me than to many others, ſince they would have lain by me neglected and unthought of, inſtead of betraying me into vice and folly, as is too often the conſequence. But, greatly pleaſed with having delivered up a property of which my indifference to it rendered me unworthy, I returned towards home, ſtrangely perplexed with the unaccountable diſpoſitions I had beheld in this ſhort progreſs. This ſubject deeply engaged my thoughts, when they were called from it by the melancholy entreaties of a woman who begged of me. She was ſitting on the graſs, with two little children by her, whom ſhe was crying over.

I was now grieved that my purſe was empty, and reproached myſelf for my too laviſh bounty. Though I was barren of the means of relief, yet I could not forbear liſtening to the poor woman's ſtory, moved by an appearance ſuperior to ſuch a degree of poverty. Her tale was affecting; an air of ſincerity in her ſorrow would have convinced me of her truth, had I then been taught incredulity, by the obſervation of deceit; but, at that time, I ſhould have believed a more improbable ſtory, as nothing could have appeared ſo incredible to me, as that a perſon ſhould utter a falſhood. I found the poor woman was reduced by misfortunes from eaſy circumſtances, and that ſhe, her babes, and her ſick huſband, were really ſtarving. As her diſtreſs was ſo great, I deſired her to accompany me home, where I hoped to be ſupplied with the means of relieving her, and aſſiſtance in carrying her children: a burden too great for her enfeebled body.

Lord Dorcheſter, who was returned before me, being told which way I was gone, came out to ſeek me, and met me in the park with one of the poor woman's babes in my arms, attended by her and the other.

I did not leave him time to enquire how I became thus accompanied; for as ſoon as he approached me, I told him, I had been among beggars, till I had learned to beg: adding that, after I had ſo much money, it was ſhameful to aſk for more; but that I had ſpent all he had given me, in buying experience, in making my own mind wiſer, and thoſe of ſome others eaſier.

I then gave him an account of all I had done, excuſing my errors, by my ignorance of the perverſeneſs of the tempers of his poor neighbours, by which I had been taught, that charity does not conſiſt alone in giving money; for that thoſe who beſtow not time and care ſufficient to diſcover the merit and neceſſities of the objects of their bounty, muſt often feed vanity, idleneſs, or avarice, and render themſelves unable to relieve real diſtreſs.

Lord Dorcheſter, with a look of ſincere affection, told me, nothing could make him ſo happy, as my affording him any opportunity of giving me pleaſure. His fortune could in no way be ſo conducive to his happineſs; and he thought I had laid out my money to the beſt purpoſe that ever any one did, ſince ſo much experience was never, he believed, ſo cheaply purchaſed.

He gave me a conſiderable ſum more, with a chearfulneſs which ſhewed the ſincerity of his word.

This ſupply afforded me the power of doing every thing requiſite for the poor woman's relief, and of enabling her to avoid the like diſtreſs for the future. But though money gave me, in this way, great enjoyment, yet I could not be quite pleaſed with the invention of coin. I

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looked upon it as the means of unhappineſs, and therefore could not forgive it, though it purchaſed me the ſatisfaction of relieving ſome of the evils it occaſioned. It appeared to me equally a ſpur to avarice, and an incitement to luxury. The ready exchange of it for all commodities, is, to the vain and voluptuous, as great a temptation to laviſhneſs in expence, as the eaſineſs of laying it up is to the miſer, to indulge the avaricious deſire of accumulating. People whoſe deſires are inſpired by reaſon alone, can ſoon ſay—'I have enough of every thing.' But vanity, avarice, and luxury, have no bounds: they who are under their influence ſuffer almoſt as much pain from their ungratified follies, as the poor can feel from indigence. I ſoon perceived that luxury was univerſal; even the poorer people enjoyed ſuch a ſhare of it, as ſurprized me, when I compared it with the plain ſimplicity in which I had been bred.

I could not reconcile myſelf to manners ſo unlike my own. I was not ſoon acquainted with many of their vices; they were ſo unintelligible to me, that I only accuſed them of folly: but yet I ſaw they were void of the ſimplicity I found in my own heart. My lord's conduct ſhewed him poſſeſſed with many virtues: but ſtill I accuſed him of inconſiſtency; for I could by no means reconcile his cruelty to me, with his benevolence to every other perſon. Though I grew too partial to him, to continue inconſolable for being ſeparated from my beloved aunt, yet ſtill, often to myſelf, and ſometimes to him, I called that treatment cruel, and bewailed it with many tears; eſpecially when I reflected on what ſhe muſt have ſuffered from the time of my departure; for I confeſs, I grieved more for her than for myſelf. My lord's converſation had charms that afforded me great conſolation; but ſhe could have none. I could not doubt his affection for me: every look, every word, expreſſed it too viſibly to leave any room for uncertainty. His eyes were filled with admiration and tenderneſs; he could ſcarcely endure abſence for an hour; all joy would forſake his countenance the moment he loſt ſight of me: but the inſtant I appeared again, his eyes ſhot raptures, and welcomed me before his tongue could utter a word. It did not ſeem to me unnatural, that a perſon who loved another ſo entirely, as I was convinced Lord Dorcheſter did me, ſhould be deſirous of ſpending his life in her ſociety; not that I could excuſe ſo forcible a method of procuring it, nor quite underſtand how ſo ſtrong an affection as rendered my company neceſſary to his happineſs could be conceived in that ſhort time: but I myſelf had found ſuch an attachment grow in ſo ſmall a ſpace, as made it not appear to me abſolutely impoſſible; and in no other way could I form any ſort of excuſe for Lord Dorcheſter's violence, though my heart longed to do it; for he had then got a ſtronger intereſt in it than I at that time imagined. I could not ſuſpect him of any ill deſign againſt my innocence: of all ſuch views I was totally ignorant; I knew not what they meant. The ſhadow of ſuch ſchemes had never been repreſented to my imagination, whoſe ſimple purity received no light from his behaviour; which was ſo modeſt and reſpectful, that equal ignorance ſeemed to rule his thoughts. Since I learned how his mind was corrupted by the depravity of cuſtom, I have often wondered at his command over himſelf; but, perhaps, he was fortunate in having none to obſerve him, but one ſo blinded by ignorance, that ſhe could not eaſily ſuſpect him of ill. I thought his love more tender and more ardent, than what my aunt and I had felt for each other: this I attributed to a warmer temper in youth, and to the probability that a friendſhip for one of equal age might be ſtronger than where there was a diſparity in years, as the ſimilitude of taſte and diſpoſition muſt naturally be greater.

A woman ſenſible of the dangers attending her ſituation, might, perhaps, have taken alarm frequently when I ſaw no cauſe for fear: thus far my ignorance was convenient to his deſign, who wiſhed to engage my heart entirely, before I could ſuſpect him. For this reaſon an elderly woman was appointed for my ſervant; a woman of ſenſe, and more improved education than any one ought to be, who could aſſiſt in ſo bad a purpoſe; for ſhe muſt have known the motive of all the inſtructions given her, to which ſhe ſo cloſely adhered, that I never received the leaſt hint from her, that there ever was known any criminal intercourſe between man and woman. Equal care was taken that no book ſhould fall into my hands, that might leſſen my ignorance in this particular. My aunt's hiſtory was kept as much a ſecret by my lord, as by herſelf, as that might have ſhewn how much

much our ſex had to fear from the other. To prevent my eyes from being accidentally opened, if I went much about in the neighbourhood, my lord took care, on one pretence or other, after the little excurſion I have mentioned, that I ſhould never go out without him or my ſervant, who he deſired might attend me when he was obliged to be abſent. By ſuch means was I kept in an ignorance, that now appears to me, on reflection, almoſt incredible. Perhaps it will ſeem ſtill more ſo to your ladyſhip; for none can comprehend the dulneſs of apprehenſion in the ignorant, who never knew that ignorance.

CHAP. XII.

DURING the remainder of the ſummer, I indulged my natural taſte for rural beauties. Taught to admire nature in all her works, I could want no better entertainment than what the fine ſituation of Lord Dorcheſter's houſe and park afforded me; eſpecially when this was heightened and refined by his converſation. He continued to inſtruct my reaſon, and pleaſe my vanity, at the ſame time. Child as I was, he treated my underſtanding with deference, and appeared to me moſt happy when he converſed with me. He ſpent almoſt all his time with me, endeavouring to open my mind. When we walked out, or ſat together under the refreſhing ſhades the park afforded us, he would turn the converſation to the objects around us, explain their natures and their uſes, would lead my thoughts from the leſſer to the greater, from the vegetable creation to the animal œconomy, and ſometimes riſe to ſtill ſublimer ſubjects: a taſk for which nothing but great affection for me could render tolerable to one of an underſtanding ſo far ſuperior. I could not but be delighted, when I obſerved how gracefully he would, by letting down his own underſtanding, endeavour to raiſe mine more to a level with it, and that with an air of tenderneſs and pleaſure, not of condeſcenſion, which, by a ſeeming humility, affronts our pride.

I was ſometimes inclined to fancy, that he was not ſo ſenſible of my inferiority as I was myſelf. If I made as poor a figure in his opinion as in my own, I thought he could not look on me as a companion worthy of him, and was afraid of mentioning my own conſciouſneſs, leſt I ſhould open his eyes to my folly. None admire knowledge ſo much as the ignorant. My aunt was no philoſopher; my lord ſeemed inclined to make me one; and when I bluſhed at my ignorance, would tell me that, in removing it, he meant not to repreſent what he taught as neceſſary to be known, only to open a field to my thoughts, which ſhould be productive of conſtant amuſement, take from ſolitude all languor and wearineſs, and, by ſharing my mind in gayer ſcenes, ſecure me from the dangers attending a total diſſipation; adding, that the pleaſures he received from obſerving the quickneſs of my apprehenſions, and the clearneſs of my ideas, was no ſmall inducement to him to continue, as a delight to himſelf, what he deſigned at firſt only as an entertainment to me. Every thing that bears the face of wonder, pleaſes a youthful mind. I was charmed with all the novelty which he repreſented to me; I was almoſt introduced into a new world; Nature wore a different face to me; my whole mind was engaged in contemplating her works; and it was no ſmall proof of my complaiſance, that I ſuffered the acquiring the French tongue to divide my thoughts: but Lord Dorcheſter deſired it; and to pleaſe him, I applied to it with as much earneſtneſs, as if it had been the higheſt gratification to myſelf. He encouraged me by flattery on the quick progreſs I made; and, by his converſation, would enliven the dull ſtudy of grammar, and teach me the language in great meaſure by diſcourſe.

My lord's endeavours to amuſe were not wholly applied to my underſtanding. My heart was to have it's ſhare of pleaſure. He made me the diſtributor of his favours. If he gave relief to the poor, it went through my hands; he enabled me to remove the diſtreſſes to which I had been a witneſs, and indulged me in my deſire of ſearching after wretchedneſs, in order to redreſs it; requiring me never to go unaccompanied by my ſervant, when he could not attend me: a care which I then eſteemed an additional obligation. I was more officiouſly obeyed in the houſe than he was; his ſervants ſeemed to have learnt from their maſter to watch every look that might ſignify my inclination, which they would not give time to riſe to a wiſh. They found this the ſerepe road to their lord's favour, to which I was certainly indebted for all their aſſi-

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duity. Had real regard for me inſpired any one of them, he would have ſhewn it, more eſpecially by warning me againſt the baſe views, which they who are acquainted with the manners of mankind, muſt know their lord entertained.

In this manner my time paſſed, till the beginning of winter; I was conſtantly employed, but never weary, for every employment was made an amuſement; and I had nothing to prevent my being really happy, but the loſs of my aunt's company, and the melancholy reflections which would ariſe whenever I thought of her ſolitary ſtate, and the grief ſhe muſt feel on account of her uncertainty concerning me. Theſe would intrude themſelves on my livelieſt hours. If I enjoyed any entertainment, the remembrance of her would check my pleaſure, and reproach me for having given way to any one while ſhe was in affliction. Could I have baniſhed theſe reflections, I ſhould have been extremely happy. The change of ſeaſon had not robbed me of all my pleaſures; it only varied them. The eaſe of my mind never depended on the gay ſcenes of nature, nor can my chearfulneſs be clouded by heavy ſkies, overſhadowing the ſun. Every thing that is agreeable is not neceſſary: the decay of all vernal beauties ſo little affected me, that I was ſhocked when my lord told me we muſt ſoon remove to London. I felt a ſort of dread at the thoughts of a change of place: the cruel ſtate of my mind during the only journey I had ever taken, had made me aſſociate very painful ideas with that of travelling.

My lord endeavoured to perſuade me that I ſhould prefer London to my country habitation during the winter. He told me of the variety of diverſions, and crowds of company, which there, in conſtant ſucceſſion, invite to amuſements.

This appeared to me no bad opportunity of renewing a ſuit, from which I had for ſome time deſiſted; and accordingly, I told him, that ſince that place afforded ſuch various entertainments, he could not find the loſs of ſo poor a companion as myſelf; it would, therefore, be the nobleſt proof of his affection, to comply with my ardent wiſhes of being reſtored to my aunt, whereby he would bind me in eternal gratitude to his generous humanity.

Deſpair of ſucceſs had made me ſo long ſilent on this ſubject, that I believe my lord was the more ſhocked at hearing me renew my requeſt: I never ſaw greater diſtreſs in a countenance than was then impreſſed on his; he made me no immediate anſwer, till ſeeming a little to recover himſelf, with a melancholy air, which improved the beauty of his face, then bedewed with tears, he preſſed my hand in his, and putting the other round my waiſt—'Can my lovely Ophelia,' ſaid he, 'wiſh to leave me? Can you be inſenſible to the misfortune it would be to me 'to loſe that ſociety from which I can 'ſcarcely bear an hour's abſence? Aſk 'any thing, but yourſelf, and judge of 'my love by the pleaſure with which I 'will grant it: but life has no charms 'with me, but in giving me the power 'of converſing with you; and to relin-'quiſh one is giving up the other.'

I was ſo moved with the effect of what I had already ſaid, that I could no longer urge my ſuite: I could not even wiſh to go while he ſeemed averſe to it; but told him, it was not juſt to be offended with me for a deſire to return to one with whom I had been ſo long united in affection, conſequently ought to love better than he could me in ſo ſhort a time. 'Ceaſe, 'my deareſt life,' interrupted he, 'ceaſe 'to excuſe yourſelf by an apology more 'cruel than the requeſt. Compare not 'the cold, the dull affection of an aunt, 'to that you have inſpired me with: her 'heart is incapable of ſuch ſtrong ſenſa-'tions. In pity to the tortures your in-'difference gives me, conceal it; allow 'me a poſſibility of flattering myſelf 'again, that you make me ſome return of 'affection for all I feel for you: do not 'throw me any more back to the pains 'of cruelleſt diſappointment, as you have 'now done, by the renewal of a deſire, 'to which I had hoped your heart had 'ceaſed to prompt you. Surely I am 'the moſt miſerable of men, to be able to 'impart and teach you every thing but 'that on which my happineſs moſt de-'pends. Can your mind only receive 'impreſſions? Is the heart of my Ophe-'lia inſenſible to no diſtreſs but mine? 'Will ſhe who endeavours to relieve all 'other wretchedneſs, increaſe that which 'ſhe alone can cure.'

Tears accompanied his words, and his head ſunk on my ſhoulder: I could not forbear mingling a few with his; I grieved for having afflicted him; and, wiping his eyes with my handkerchief, endeavoured to repair what I had done, with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of my affection, which indeed I never felt ſo powerfully

as

as at that moment; and, with a warmth which my heart inſpired, aſſured him, that gratitude to my aunt for her care of and goodneſs to my helpleſs infancy, and pity for what ſhe muſt have ſuffered on my account, were the only ſentiments that could make me prefer her ſociety to his.

My unwillingneſs to give him pain made me ever after ſilent on this ſubject. I thought ſuch tender affection deſerved my gratitude; and ſhould have looked upon the urging this requeſt as a greater breach of that duty towards him than my deſiſting from an unavailing attempt was of my want of duty to my aunt.

But neither the relinquiſhing that hope, nor the kindeſt expreſſions I could uſe, had power to raiſe my lord's ſpirits: his dejection laſted ſome days, during which he told me, all I did now was out of compaſſion; what I ſaid before, was the dictates of my inclination; and while that thought laſted, it was not in the power of words to give him conſolation. However, theſe melancholy impreſſions, which ſpread their infection over my heart, wore off before the time of our departure.

My lord's ſpirits were not raiſed by the neceſſity of changing his abode. He ſighed after the ſeaſon of leiſure, which left him to the free enjoyment of my company; whereas his winter occupations muſt frequently divide us. This was a mortifying reflection for me, who, both by inclination and cuſtom, was now taught to think his continual converſation abſolutely neceſſary to my eaſe of mind, while I was detained from my ſolitude. But he would endeavour to perſuade me that I ſhould be better pleaſed in London; that novelty and gaiety would more than recompenſe me for his enforced abſence; and with this notion he would increaſe his dejection, though I often told him this ſeemed rather the fear of hate than love, ſince his uneaſineſs aroſe from the apprehenſion of my being pleaſed. He raved at my inſenſibility in terms that I could not well comprehend, and made me find that ignorance was dangerous when people are eaſily offended; for, without deſign, I had ſeveral times diſpleaſed him.

CHAP. XIII.

THE day before we left the place, Lord Dorcheſter told me, that it would be adviſable for me to be ſilent as to my birth, and former way of life, as well as to the means by which I was taken from it; for the oddneſs of the event would make people curious to ſee me, and ſo attentive in obſerving me, as would greatly pain my natural baſhfulneſs; and that, if they perceived my ignorance of the cuſtoms of the world, it would ſubject me to ridicule. He therefore adviſed me to give way only to ſilent wonder, if any thing ſurprized me, except when he only was preſent; for to him my ſimplicity and natural remarks muſt always be moſt delightful; but that to others it would be unneceſſary to give any further account of myſelf, than that I was under his care.

Either my pride or my reaſon was hurt by the concealment my lord propoſed; I believe the former. Though untaught, reaſon might have made me condemn thoſe who could ridicule unavoidable ignorance; yet only pride could make me ſo warm in my cenſure. I told my lord, that the openneſs of my diſpoſition made me ill qualified for any concealment; that it would be ſcarcely poſſible for me to hide my ignorance entirely; and when any ſigns of it broke forth, it might make me appear ridiculous to ſuch as knew not my education; whereas, thoſe who did could not be ſurprized at the neceſſary effects of it; that, were it a misfortune or a fault, it ſhould rather excite pity than mirth. 'To triumph over the weakneſs 'of others,' I added, 'is cruel; but 'when their inferiority proceeds merely 'from the want of advantage and oppor-'tunities of improvement, it is no leſs 'fooliſh than inhuman to be proud of 'a ſuperiority ſo obtained. To practiſe 'virtue, is to live up to the dictates of 'pure and divine wiſdom; to know our 'duty, the end and the deſign of our crea-'tion; and make it our rule of action, to 'adore, with pure and warm devotion, 'the Author of our Being; to be not only 'humane and benevolent to our fellow-'creatures, but mindful even to what we 'eſteem the loweſt work of God, is wiſ-'dom and knowledge, beyond what 'your arts can teach; for, by what I have 'already ſeen, in leading men after vain 'purſuits, they make them neglect the 'moſt important duties.'

My lord anſwered, that what I ſaid was more agreeable to reaſon than cuſtom; that the multitude were fooliſh and inconſiderate, and would both blame and praiſe without juſt cauſe. Such opinions,

indeed, a rational perſon might think below his regard; but experience would teach, that fools, like other reptiles, could teaze us with their noiſe, notwithſtanding our juſt ſenſe of their inſignificance.

He then repreſented to me, how diſagreeable I ſhould find it to have all eyes upon me wherever I appeared; every one, if I ſpoke, liſtening to hear what the fair ſavage would ſay, and calling natural reaſon and ſenſe, becauſe little known to them, ridiculous ignorance.

If he had not mollified the term of Savage, he might have incurred the anger ſo juſtly due to the people he deſcribed; but he gilded it with love and flattery; and the vexation I had received at my firſt appearance, from being gazed at, was ſo freſh in my remembrance, that it prevailed upon me to conſent to the ſilence he required concerning my paſt life.

This was not the only thing for which he was to prepare me. He now informed me, that we ſhould not live in the ſame houſe. This ſhocked me, I knew not why; I could not reſtrain a ſtarting tear; I felt a proof of abated love; but pride checked my uttering the accuſation, whilſt reſentment, under the appearance of ſurprize and curioſity, enquired the reaſon of it. My lord told me, that his houſe was not large enough to receive me, with convenience to myſelf; beſide, that the great numbers of people he was obliged to ſee upon buſineſs, would be very troubleſome to me. The delicacy of theſe reaſons, which I did not doubt were real, made me ſpeak plainer than reſentment had done. I aſſured him, that nothing could be ſo vexatious to me, as being abſent from him; and that, were we in different houſes, I muſt loſe a great deal of his company, which I might otherwiſe enjoy, eſpecially as buſineſs would engage him ſo much at home: for, were I under the ſame roof, the ſhorteſt intervals would allow me the ſight of him.

Though he was tranſported with my reaſon for begging not to be ſeparated from him, yet he plauſibly evaded all I could ſay, and brought me to acquieſce, though not to approve.

CHAP. XIV.

THE next day we bid adieu to the delightful place, where every thing had ſeemed dedicated to my inclinations, and began our journey to London. The firſt day paſſed agreeably; the ſecond was very favourable for travelling, and we ſet out early. But ſtopping on the road to breakfaſt, my lord left me, and went to make a viſit in the neighbourhood; where I was to call upon him after our neceſſary refreſhment.

Being told the chariot was ready, I went down ſtairs; and finding it at the door, got in, ordering the ſervant of the houſe to tell my lord's ſervants to follow, not ſeeing them in the readineſs I expected.

As I had no doubt but my lord's ſervant knew better where to call upon him than I did, I made no attempt towards giving directions, which could have been but very imperfect. Indeed, I had ſcarcely time to ſeat myſelf, he drove on with ſuch rapidity. I was not inclined to complain of the haſte; for no pace could ſeem too faſt for me that was to carry me to the companion whoſe abſence, ſhort as it was, I found time to regret. But after proceeding with unabated ſpeed for half an hour, I began to wonder at the diſtance which my lord had called trifling; for we had gone ſome miles, and yet were not arrived at his friend's houſe. I grew alarmed, and could not help fearing that the coachman had not received ſufficient inſtructions; I called to him, and exerted my voice to it's higheſt key to make him hear: but all in vain; the road was extremely ſtoney, and the noiſe the chariot made ſo great, that my weak voice was drowned by it. I then recollected that I had never known it rattle ſo before. This might be the effect of the ſtoneyneſs of the road; but yet I wondered I ſhould not have found it, in ſome degree, in ſmoother ways. The lining and inſide appeared ſo much the ſame, I could not ſuſpect I was in a different equipage, till the coachman looking half-way round, I thought, though I had but an imperfect glance of his face, that it was not my lord's ſervant. I then looked out at the painting on the outſide of the doors, and was immediately ſenſible that I was not in my lord's vehicle.

I now grew ſtrangely alarmed, though I knew not what to think, and called to the man to ſtop as loud as I poſſibly could, but with as little ſucceſs as before; for my voice had not received equal ſtrength with my impatience: and, after having ſcreamed myſelf hoarſe, was reduced to wait in ſilence for a lucky opportunity to do

do what my efforts could not; imagining ſomething muſt ſoon ſtop our extraordinary ſpeed. In this hope, however, I was diſappointed; for it continued ſome hours longer, which, fretted and fatigued as I was, appeared to me an age. At laſt, the chariot drove up to a houſe, and ſtopped at the door: but I was by that time ſo confounded and hurried, that I was in a kind of ſtupefaction, and ſcarcely knew how to aſk the queſtions I wanted to have anſwered.

A fat old woman hobbled out of the houſe to meet us, and opened the chariot-door. My conſternation was too great to allow of much connection in my ideas. I cried out, on her taking hold of me, for her appearance was diſguſtful—'Who 'are you? Where's my lord? What 'place is this?' Not waiting for anſwers to the reſpective queſtions till all were uttered.

'Do not be in ſuch a hurry, ſweet 'young lady!' interrupted the fat gentlewoman. 'You are with friends, my 'pretty dear. His lordſhip's honour will 'be here bye and bye. You know he 'muſt not come in broad day-light. But 'fear not: as ſoon as it is dark, he will 'fly to your arms, like any ſparrow to 'his mate; and pretty ones they are, in 'faith! Aye, aye, he has an hawk's eye 'for beauty! Like to like! Beauty to 'beauty! It ſhould be ſo! All the wo-'men long for him; and happy the ſhe 'that he vouchſafes to take notice of!'

If the firſt ſight of this woman diſguſted me, her manner and diſcourſe were ſtill more odious. As ſhe attempted to lead me into the houſe, I inſenſibly reſiſted: I had no reaſon to refuſe it, but confuſion and diſlike directed my actions; and I ſhould ſcarcely have known how ſtrongly they operated, had not the old gentlewoman continued—'Why do 'you ſtare ſo, ſweet Madam? Though 'I am a ſtranger, I will be as true and 'truſty to you as ever a woman you 'could meet with. You ſeem hugely 'timerſome, truly; but I warrant we 'ſhall ſee you more couragiouſer bye 'and bye!'

Conquering reſiſtance, which was unintended, I ſuffered myſelf to be led into the houſe, where ſhe continued talking in the ſame fulſome manner; till, no longer able to endure her, I deſired to be left alone: a favour ſhe would not grant, without a little prelude to her compliance. 'A pretty dear!' cried ſhe, 'ſhe 'wants to think a little! Well, well, 'think as much as you pleaſe till even-'ing! You tender ones love to pay it off 'with thinking! Well, thoughts are 'free, as they ſay, or the Lord have 'mercy upon us!' Had not her words flowed even more freely than her thoughts could riſe, I ſhould have liked her company better, and found leſs occaſion to cry out for mercy, though ſhe ſeemed to think freedom of thought ſo dangerous. The old woman, indeed, was not miſtaken in ſuppoſing I wanted to think; for I really had occaſion for a little time to compoſe my mind, in order to get ſome light into this ſtrange event. But little could reflection give me; I was more than ever at a loſs to gueſs at Lord Dorcheſter's meaning in all this, and thinking more increaſed my perplexity. I repented that my diſlike to the woman's converſation had made me forbear trying if ſhe could give me any information as to my lord's intention; which was not impoſſible, as ſhe ſeemed ſo well apprized of the time he was to come there. My repentance was in no danger of being long, as a ſincere amendment may reaſonably comfort the repentant perſon; for in about an hour ſhe returned, and gave me an opportunity of repairing my neglect, though not ſo immediately as at her firſt appearance I hoped to do: for, till I had ſtood her diſcharge of nonſenſe, I had no chance of being heard. Before I could make an attempt to ſpeak, ſhe began.

'What, ſtill wiſhing, and wiſhing the 'ſun to make haſte to-bed? Yes, yes, 'to be ſure, the moon gives a more pret-'tier light to ſuch a ſweet pair as you 'are! Well, a handſomer couple one 'would not wiſh to ſee in a ſummer's-'day! You are a perfect beauty, ſweet-'ing!—and a more comelier gentleman 'never trod this earth! But, my pretty 'jewel! one cannot live upon ſheer love; 'you will love the better for a little good 'eating and drinking! Do not think you 'ſhall be ſtarved in this houſe. Here it 'comes!'

Accordingly the cloth was laid, and the table ſpread, in leſs time than ſhe had ſpent in her preface to it; and ſhe ſo notably beſtirred herſelf in this part of her buſineſs, that I could not make her liſten to the queſtions I put concerning the reaſons of my lord's ſo ſuddenly altering the intentions with which he left me. I hoped for more attention, when that part

of her employ was over; but found her thoughts had ſtill a ſtronger attraction; for when the table was covered, her whole faculties were engroſſed in doing honour to her entertainment, on which ſhe made ſuch depredation, that I no longer wondered at her bulk. I had little inclination to eat, therefore repeated my queſtions; but got no anſwer, except, ſhe knew nothing of that. The firſt ſhe had heard of the affair, was, that my lord would be there as that night, and that ſhe might expect me in the morning. As for any farther deſign, ſhe was ignorant of it. Finding I could learn little from her, I entreated her abſence, as ſoon as ſhe had finiſhed her meal; and determined to wait my lord's arrival with what patience I could. From him I hoped to learn the occaſion of this ſtrange whim, for as ſuch I could but eſteem it; and repined at my fate, that had ſubjected me to be the ſport of any one's caprice; for it had really a very diſagreeable effect on my ſpirits. However, as I grew more compoſed, I began to perſuade myſelf that a man whoſe love had been ſo very ſincere could not mean to diſtreſs me; he could not be much to blame; Chance muſt certainly be partly in fault. With theſe reflections, adminiſtering what conſolation I could to my mind, I waited the cloſe of the day; and when that arrived, I durſt not call for artificial light, leſt my fat landlady ſhould accompany the candles: and ſhe did not bring them voluntarily, I ſuppoſe, from a notion that I was aſleep; for I got away by expreſſing a wearineſs, which was real, though a deſire of ſleep was not the conſequence of it.

CHAP. XV.

AFTER I had been about an hour in the dark, I heard an equipage drive into the yard. My heart now felt a flutter it had never known before. This being the firſt time of any long ſeparation from my lord, I was, till now, ignorant of the pain or pleaſure of expectation. I knew not how very dear his company was to me, till taught by being a whole day without it. I immediately thought I penetrated his deſign in this whimſical adventure; imagining that he certainly had contrived it as a puniſhment for my deſire of leaving him; and to prevent my re-urging that requeſt, by making me better acquainted with my own heart, which could never be able to bear his abſence.

My impatience would have carried me to meet him, had not the want of light made me unable to find my way: however, I was pleaſed to diſcover, by the haſte with which he ran up ſtairs, that he was not leſs impatient to ſee me. The door flew open, while his hobbling guide puffed after him, with a pace ſo unequal to his, that, when he entered the room, the glimmering of her diſtant light ſerved only to give us a very imperfect view of each other. I ſcarcely could diſcern him before I found myſelf in his arms. The rapidity with which he flew to me, and the eagerneſs of his embrace, aſtoniſhed and ſtartled me: I never had ſeen any degree of ſuch familiarity in him. I was not ſenſible of any impropriety in the expreſſions of affection; but, without knowing a reaſon for it, I was diſturbed with this addreſs. I could not think ſuch violence the neceſſary conſequence of love: I was as much rejoiced, I imagined, as he could be; and yet ſuch behaviour did not appear natural to me. Suddenly we heard a ſcream, accompanied by ſome oaths in a coarſer tone, which ſerved as baſs to the ſhrill treble of the affrighted old gentlewoman, and terrified me to a great degree. We preſently heard their ſteps upon the ſtairs, and a man crying out—'Where is this 'diſgrace to my family? Reſtore her to 'me, or this ſword ſhall force her from 'you!'—'Never!' anſwered the gentleman with me, in a voice quite different from my lord's; 'never ſhall ſhe be torn 'from theſe arms! With my life will I 'defend her!' And caught faſt hold of me, who was endeavouring to run as far from theſe horrid threats as I could. Had not fear overpowered my ſenſes, I might have perceived there muſt be ſome miſtake in this affair; but fright and ignorance made me incapable of drawing any rational concluſions; and I had little chance of recovering myſelf, as the old woman entered trembling, with a candle, followed by a middle-aged gentleman, who had his drawn ſword in his hand, and fury in his eyes. A lady, about the ſame age, came laſt, though not behindhand in anger, if one might judge by her countenance or words, both very expreſſive: but not the ſhrillneſs of her voice,

voice, or ſharpneſs of her tongue, a woman's only weapons, could have terrified me ſo much as that ſame inſtrument of ſteel. It's appearance was ſo awful in the eyes of the gentleman I had ſuppoſed Lord Dorcheſter, that he let me go, that he might the better oppoſe his aſſailant in the ſame manner; and the firſt uſe I made of my liberty, was to fly to a cloſet at the other end of the room, wherein I bolted myſelf with the utmoſt expedition; for which I might not ſo conveniently have found time, had not the lady puſhed her fat guide, with a violence which her legs, oppreſſed by their burden, could not ſupport.

Down fell the mighty load of fleſh upon the ground; and the lady, not expecting to overthrow ſuch a mountain, had exerted her ſtrength too far, and, by the old woman's giving way, was ſo drawn off her bias, that ſhe fell over her.

Though I continued to tremble more than did honour to my courage, yet I made uſe of the privilege the glaſs-door to the cloſet afforded me, obſerving through it the ſkirmiſh from which I was ſo happily delivered. The clamours grew intolerable; the old gentleman treated the young one with fury, the younger returned it with ſcorn; names quite new to me were given and returned; each called aloud for vengeance, but neither haſtened to take it. Their ſwords ſhone bright indeed, but appeared ſafe as in their ſcabbards; as they were not quite reſplendent enough to dazzle the eyes, they ſeemed perfectly innocent.

More vigorouſly did our ſofter ſex exert itſelf. The lady adminiſtered fuel to her own anger by reviling the ſtumbling block that had ignominiouſly brought her to the ground. She called her bawd, ennobling every ſentence with that name; which was ſo unknown to me, that I imagined it a ſynonimous term for a fat woman. She accuſed her of ruining her daughter; and, having worked herſelf up to a proper ſpirit, fell to beating her moſt unmercifully.

The victim of her rage roared all the time; as if ſhe expected every blow would end the life ſhe had nouriſhed with ſo much pleaſure and care. At laſt, finding that defence not ſufficient to deliver her from an enemy, whoſe ears had been too much accuſtomed to her own 'troublous uproar,' to be capable of being wounded by clamour, ſhe tried her ſtrength, and ſtruggled with ſuch ſucceſs, that ſhe extricated her arms from under her antagoniſt, and returned the blows. The battle now grew very hot; fierce were the attacks, and vigorous the defence. Tongues, inſtead of drums, animated the combatants; for they did not ſuſpend the exerciſe of ſpeech, though their hands ſufficiently proclaimed their animoſity to perſons of any tolerable apprehenſion. But they aſſaulted each other's ears with as much violence as their caps; abuſe flew as thick as blows; and it was not long before they were both uncoiffed. The loſs of one cap expoſed to view a fine head of grey hair, though then cruelly diſhevelled, that ſeemed to denote more maturity of reaſon and coolneſs of brain than was agreeable to what had paſſed. The other ſeized theſe hoary honours; the reverence they ſhould have inſpired being totally extinguiſhed by envy, which gave redoubled rage to the enemy. The ſame accident happened to herſelf, having unfortunately expoſed a hairleſs head, for time had been more cruel to her: however, a few graſps made ſuch violent depredations, that, as Shakeſpeare ſays, 'She made theſe odds all even;' for, getting the better of the partiality of time, ſhe reduced her adverſary to the ſame bald ſtate as herſelf.

While the women ſhewed an implacable deſire of revenge, the wiſer men ſtill contented themſelves with only declaring their thirſt for vengeance. Their reſolutions ſeemed all for blood and murder; every word threatened maiming, ſcarifications, wounds, or death: but they were too great philoſophers not to govern their actions, though their unruly tongues could not be controuled. They brandiſhed their ſwords; but each was careful to avoid giving any ſcratch that might exaſperate his antagoniſt. In ſhort, they ſtormed ſo exactly in the ſame key, that neither found himſelf ſo inferior to the other, as to be reduced to call in a ſharper aſſiſtant; nor could either prevail on himſelf to attempt the deſtruction each ſwore to effect, till the old gentleman, recollecting he might gain the *honour* of a *murder* without danger of a mortal reſiſtance, *prudently* changed the object of his threats, and calling to me under the *flattering* denomination of his Shameleſs Daughter, ſwore he would break

break down the door if I did not open it inſtantly; as ſolemnly aſſuring me, that, when he could get me within his reach, he would pierce my diſobedient heart. This, no doubt, was a moſt *alluring* invitation; he would have had an excellent chance of bringing me out of my ſanctuary by ſuch a declaration, had I not grown ſenſible that I owed my danger to a miſtake, and therefore the ſureſt way of avoiding the one was to rectify the other. Though as ſoon as I became convinced of the error which occaſioned this buſtle, I began to find ſome entertainment in the fray, yet my ſpirits were in too diſcompoſed a ſituation to be much pleaſed. I reſolved to ſhew myſelf to quiet the tempeſt, but knew not how to perform it ſafely. Should that old man remain as obſtinate in his error as the young one, he might deprive me of all ſenſe, before I could reſtore him to his ſenſes. In age, anger will ſometimes be quicker than the ſight. I therefore was reſolved not to ſurrender at diſcretion, but purpoſed to capitulate before I ventured out of my fortreſs. I called out to them that they were all miſtaken in me; that I was united to none of them, either by blood or affection; and if the gentleman who ſuppoſed himſelf my father would but give his eyes leiſure to convince him of his error, I would come forth to them.

The promiſe I aſked was given me, and I opened my door; but I had not gone two ſteps into the room, before the old man, whoſe eyes were grown dim by age, and his reaſon obſcured by paſſion, ran at me with his ſword drawn. I was flying back into my aſylum, from whence I ſhould not eaſily have been again tempted forth, had not the young gentleman reſcued me from the ſudden end with which my exiſtence was threatened, by catching hold of the outrageous father. Upon the promiſe of not letting him go till better light had cleared up the miſtake, I conſented to venture to approach the candle, which immediately ſhewed them all that they were in an error, and gave riſe to a new kind of uproar, one exclaiming for his Harriet, the other crying out for his daughter; and all appeared ſo mortified to find a ſtranger in her place, that I began to apprehend a bad reception, eſpecially as I could give but very indifferent anſwers to their various queſtions. We were not long at a loſs to comprehend that all this confuſion was occaſioned by the ſervant at the inn having informed me of the readineſs of this young nobleman's equipage, inſtead of the lady ſo furiouſly conteſted, and by my heedleſſneſs, which had prevented me from diſcovering the blunder. The view of the company was now to deceive each other; all declared the impoſſibility of going in ſearch of the lady I had perſonated, in ſo dark and ſo ſtormy a night, eſpecially as the road was intricate and hard to find. But, as it appeared, this was a feint; for the old gentleman, I ſuppoſe, conſidering that it would be difficult for him to ſteal a march, as he was lodged in the enemy's quarters, thought it better to relinquiſh his hopes, in order to diſappoint the other. Accordingly, he told him he was convinced he only deſigned to bubble him, in lulling him into ſecurity, by agreeing with him in this point, and then ſetting forth after the fugitive, when he imagined his eaſy dupe was faſt aſleep.

He acknowledged he had entertained the ſame intention himſelf; but recollecting how difficult it would be to execute it, he was reſolved to make it equally ſo to both, and would not go into bed the whole night, nor ſuffer his horſes to be unharneſſed, nor his ſervants to enter the houſe, unleſs his lordſhip would conſent that their ſervants ſhould be ſo lodged together, that they could not be ignorant of each other's motions. Beſides which, he required that the keys of the houſe doors ſhould be depoſited in my hands, and that I ſhould not deliver them up till they met next morning at day-break; promiſing then to carry me to the town from whence I had by miſtake been brought.

The ill grace with which the young nobleman agreed to a propoſal that it was to no purpoſe to reject, was a ſufficient proof that the old gentleman had not miſtaken his views. A ſupper was now ſerved up, which I ſuppoſed was intended for a more amicable entertainment. Every one eat as their ſeveral diſappointments would permit them, but none ſo little as myſelf. The fatigue and great agitation of ſpirits which I had that day endured, affected me very much; and the uneaſineſs I imagined Lord Dorcheſter would be under on my account, with my uncertainty of finding him at the town where I was to be carried

ried the next day, was an additional weight to my ſpirits. However, melancholy or ill-humour made us appear much upon an equality; not a word was uttered by one of the company; the dumb ſhew of civility was ſcarcely kept up; and, as ſoon as ſupper was ended, the elderly pair deſired to have the condition immediately complied with, and then to be ſhewn to their chamber.

The young lord would have deferred the delivery of the keys, on pretence of the earlineſs of the hour; but prudence or poſitiveneſs, qualities to be expected in old age, rejected all his evaſions in a manner that ſhewed his folly in preſuming to form expectations on the eaſy credulity of one who had arrived at the age of ſuſpicion.

At laſt, yielding to neceſſity, he delivered the keys into my hands, at the ſame time entreating me to allow him an hour of my company; aſſuring me, in a whiſper, that, could he obtain that favour, he ſhould eſteem the accident to which he ſhould owe it as a very fortunate one; adding, that a glance of my charms muſt efface the impreſſion which any other might have made on a heart that had never felt their ſuperior excellence.

This bombaſt compliment was unanſwerable to my grovelling genius, ſo I attempted not to reply, and found no inclination to grant his requeſt: for the familiarity of behaviour which confounded and ſurprized me, when I took him for Lord Dorcheſter, appeared odious to me ſince I knew him to be another.

My room was cloſe to that wherein the gentleman and lady lay. As ſoon as I got into it, I bolted my door, the better to ſecure the truſt repoſed in me; fearing leſt any attempt might be made by the young lord on the keys in my cuſtody. Though I was not acquainted with the merits of the cauſe, yet I found myſelf inclined to the ſide of the parents: they had a natural right over their daughter; and might juſtly have demanded more duty from her, than, according to the appearances of the affair, they ſeemed to me to have received. They had, among the articles of agreement, ſtipulated for my lying near them, which ſecured me from moleſtation. Fatigue got the better of vexation, and gave me, perhaps, a quieter night than any of the family.

CHAP. XVI.

HAD not a habit of early riſing taught me to wake at break of day, the noiſe in this houſe of confuſion would have

'——Broke the bands of ſleep aſunder,
And rouz'd me like a rattling peal of thunder.'

The eagerneſs to depart raiſed them all at once; the ſervants were haſtened; they themſelves hurried; and every thing was ordered with ſo much noiſe and buſtle, that all were confounded; and their intention was retarded by their eagerneſs to put it in execution.

I, by proceeding without any extraordinary haſte, was dreſſed and ready before any of the company; and my ſpirits being elevated by my approaching departure from a houſe I had ſo little reaſon to like, I found ſome entertainment in obſerving how much they hindered each other by their general hurry. At laſt, however, we got into the reſpective vehicles; the young lord alone in his, I with the old gentleman and lady. The former had preſſed me to accept of a place in his equipage; but though neither of them ſeemed to promiſe a very amicable ſociety, yet the others appeared as if they would be the leaſt troubleſome.

To be alone in the midſt of crowds has been the counterpart of that boaſt of abſtracted philoſophy, ſo often, though ſo ſeldom, with reaſon, pretended to, of never being leſs alone than when alone; but my companions might, without vanity, have claimed all the honour that can ariſe from that ſublime neglect of every thing around us; for had each been the only being on earth, there could not have exiſted leſs ſociety. An abſolute ſilence was preſerved during the whole road; and ſuch is the force of example, that though nothing could be more foreign to my nature, yet I followed it implicitly, and was as dumb as my companions. In this unſociable way we travelled till the beſt part of the day was ſpent: for not having proceeded with the expedition I had done the day before, I found it a long journey, and ſomewhat the more ſo for growing very hungry; for none of the company would ſtop on the road. It was too much to mortify at once two ſuch natural appetites as hunger

ger and the love of talking; but I could meet with no redreſs. I did indeed break ſilence, juſt to ſignify my opinion of the neceſſity there was for a little refreſhment, both for us and the horſes; but the only conſequence of it was a ſurly ſentence from the old lady, by way of anſwer; who, in a grumbling tone, ſaid, thoſe were lucky who were ſo much at their eaſe as to think of ſuch things; for her part, her daughter had given her dinner and ſupper too; and if I had not been careleſs and fooliſh, I might now have been where I ſhould be. Thus rebuffed, I reſumed the ſilence; which was never after broken by any of the company, except by the cough of the old gentleman, who was ſomewhat phthiſical.

When we arrived at the inn from which I had been ſo ſtrangely carried, the firſt perſon I ſaw was Lord Dorcheſter, who I afterwards underſtood, and then hoped, was watching at the door. He rather lifted than handed me out of the coach, receiving me with an embrace, which I frankly returned, overjoyed at being once more reſtored to him.

My lord led me into the inn, and, with looks of inexpreſſible delight, repeated his congratulations on my arrival. He told me, that having waited at his friend's houſe long after the time he expected me to call on him, he grew uneaſy leſt ſome accident had befallen me, and came back to the inn to learn the occaſion of my delay. He did not long remain in ignorance. He found a very handſome young woman in the inn yard, almoſt frantick; all the people gathered about her; while ſhe, inſenſible of the ridicule to which ſhe expoſed herſelf, lamented her ill fortune, and uttered all the exclamations of deſpair. Though the young lady's features were altered by fear and anguiſh, yet my lord recollected that he had been acquainted with her in London, where ſhe was educated by an aunt with whom ſhe lived, till her father, who, though a man of fortune, was vulgar in manners, and low in underſtanding, gave her his ſervant for her mother-in-law.

The ſcene was changed; he was now reduced to a more abject ſervitude than his bride was in before. This woman inſiſted on her daughter-in-law's returning home; thinking her, while at a diſtance, more out of her power than was agreeable to her love for her new-acquired dominion. Lord Dorcheſter had heard of this melancholy change in the young lady's way of life, and had pitied her; but was now alarmed by the apprehenſions of ſome much greater diſtreſs. He enquired the cauſe of her diſtracted behaviour, and received for anſwer, that it was owing to another young lady's having by miſtake gone in the chariot deſigned for her, by which means ſhe was left without a guide to the place where ſhe was to go; but the occaſion of her being ſo very much diſtreſſed about it they could not tell, nor what ſhe meant by continually exclaiming, that ſhe was undone ſhould ſhe be diſcovered, and was the moſt miſerable wretch upon earth.

My lord aſked who it was that had gone in the conveyance ſhe ſo much regretted; when one of his ſervants perceiving him in the crowd, came up, and anſwered his queſtion, by telling him it muſt be Miſs Ophelia Lenox, for ſhe was no where to be found; and one of the ſervants of the inn had confeſſed, that ſuppoſing it her equipage, he had informed her it was ready. Another belonging to the houſe ſoon confirmed this, by declaring he ſaw me get into it, and had received orders from me to bid the ſervants follow directly.

My lord was polite enough to tell me, that he was now a fit companion for the diſappointed lady, being almoſt as mad as ſhe was; till his mind received ſome conſolation, by conſidering that the miſtake could not laſt long, and that he might get ſuch information from her, as would enable him to overtake me. Upon this he prevailed with her to go into a room, where he could more conveniently enquire into the affair, and ſhe might with more decency indulge her grief.

The young lady frankly declared to him, that, from the time ſhe left London, ſhe had received the moſt cruel treatment from her mother-in-law; who, not contented with the ſufferings ſhe could herſelf inflict, had frequently exaſperated her father ſo much againſt her, that ſhe had led a wretched life. The beginning of that ſummer Lord —— came into their neighbourhood on a viſit. He ſoon diſtinguiſhed her by his addreſſes; and, in the opportunities repeated viſits gave him, had prevailed with her to fly from all the miſeries inflicted on her, and commit herſelf to his protection. The manner of her flight

was

was performed according to the plan they had agreed on; when, in the middle of the execution, I fruſtrated their ſcheme by my unlucky miſtake.

Lord Dorcheſter told me, that, out of a juſt ſenſe of the duties a child owes to her parent, he endeavoured to perſuade her againſt ſo great a breach of hers; adviſing her to go to her aunt, and aſſuring her of his moſt earneſt endeavours to prevail with her father to conſent to her living there.

His care was not unavailing; the young lady conſented; and he hired her a chariot, ſending one of his ſervants to eſcort her to London. All the ſatisfaction he received, was from having reclaimed her from diſobedience; for ſhe was ſo ignorant of what was to become of her after ſhe got into Lord ——'s equipage, (his ſervant being her guide) that ſhe could not give the leaſt account where I might be found. However, after my lord ſaw her ſet out towards London, he and his ſervants went forth on a fruitleſs ſearch, till night, and deſpair of ſucceſs brought them back to the inn, with an intent of making a more exact ſearch the following day.

Accordingly, they purſued their purpoſe the next morning as ſoon as day appeared; but having been equally unſucceſsful as the night before, he returned to the inn, ſtill in hopes I might be again brought thither. Reduced to this expectation as his only reſource, he was walking every way within ſight of the inn, in the extremeſt impatience, when his attention was awakened by the ſound of two vehicles from a croſs-road. Probability was now unneceſſary. The ſmalleſt poſſibility is ſufficient to flatter our expectations in any thing we ardently deſire. My lord's hopes were raiſed, and were not diſappointed; for it was our equipages which had given riſe to them.

CHAP. XVII.

AFTER I had performed my part in giving an account of all the conſequences of my error, and made ſome ſevere reflections on my inadvertency, Lord Dorcheſter, finding that the young lady's father and mother were in the inn, left me, in order to perform the promiſe he had given, of trying the force of his eloquence on a mind too inſenſible to afford him any certainty of ſucceſs.

Above two hours paſſed in this conference; at the end of which he returned to me, and informed me, that he had not only prevailed on the gentleman to forgive his daughter's intentional diſobedience, in conſideration of her ſincere repentance, and to give her leave to remain with her aunt, but had even obtained the permiſſion under his hand, with a ſettlement on his daughter while ſhe continued there; to put it out of his wife's power to make him recal his promiſe.

I have related this affair as it was then told me; but I ſhall now give your ladyſhip an exact account of ſome circumſtances which were concealed from me, till ſecreſy was of no longer uſe. What appeared plain enough to my undoubting ignorance, would ſeem obſcure to thoſe whoſe knowledge of the world leads them to ſee a deficiency in particulars.

This nobleman had not been long in the neighbourhood of this family, before he began to make his addreſſes to the young fugitive; and, pretending to be unmarried, he feigned honourable views, inventing reaſons for concealing it from her father. He at laſt prevailed with her to make her eſcape from her parents, and fly to him, promiſing to ſanctify ſo raſh a ſtep by an immediate marriage.

Theſe particulars ſhe related to Lord Dorcheſter, who acquainted her with the deceit put upon her credulity; informing her, that the young nobleman was already married to a woman of rank equal to himſelf, but was too well known in the world for a debauched, diſſolute man.

After ſuch a diſcovery, it was not difficult to convince her that his views were far different from what he pretended, and that marriage had been only made the lure to draw her into his power. As love had not extinguiſhed her ſenſe of virtue, little conſideration was requiſite to determine her to fly a man unworthy her confidence or eſteem. But ſhe durſt not return home; therefore could eaſier reſolve what courſe to avoid than what to take. In ſuch grief of mind, ſhe was incapable of thinking to any purpoſe: but Lord Dorcheſter's humanity led him to think for her; and, as I have ſaid, he prevailed with her to go to her aunt, from whoſe goodneſs he encouraged her to hope a pardon for an action rather raſh than criminal, to which ſhe had been

driven by the ill treatment of her mother-in-law, as much as ſhe had been enticed by the man whom ſhe loved too well to ſuſpect.

As I had no notion a man could be guilty of ſo bad an action, I ſimply believed the ſtory as my lord related it; who, chuſing rather to take advantage of my ignorance, than to place his hopes in corrupting the innocence of my mind, thought proper to conceal circumſtances which muſt lead me into reflections that could not fail to alarm me on account of my own ſituation.

I had been ſo haraſſed by the events of that and the preceding day, that my lord would not attempt to proceed any farther till the next morning; by which time he hoped I might be a little refreſhed.

The remainder of our journey was performed with ſafety and quiet, nothing uncommon happening to us the reſt of the time. We arrived in London towards the cloſe of the evening, and I was obliged to borrowed light for the gay appearance of the multitude of ſhops with which it is filled; and, by being much illuminated, they received double luſtre. As all was new, all was remarkable to me; and at every thing we drove by, 'I wondered 'with the fooliſh face of praiſe.' What then paſſed in my mind has convinced me that want of experience makes us as mere children at ſixteen as at ſix years old. Every gewgaw charmed me; every tawdry ſhop amazed me. I ſpoke only in exclamations; every look ſtared aſtoniſhment. The vivacity of my ſentiments made my folly the more conſpicuous; but it was at laſt curbed, by obſerving how much my lord was diverted with my behaviour. I wiſhed him all poſſible entertainment on any other ſubject, but my pride would not ſuffer me to continue the object of his mirth. With much difficulty, I endeavoured to conceal my emotions by ſilence; but I found that my eyes ſpoke them as ſtrongly as my words; and my lord ſhewed me to how little purpoſe a perſon will pretend to act the hypocrite, whoſe thoughts are legible in the eyes. He not only ſaw what my ſilence would have concealed, but the reaſon why I wiſhed to do it; and, to gratify my pride, ſaid all that could ſerve to convince me that ignorance was no reproach to thoſe who had not the means of learning. All we received from Nature was reaſon; this would give us a ſenſe of virtue, and every valuable ſentiment; but as to the manual operations of art, it would be ſtupidity not to be ſtruck at the firſt ſight of them. By ſuch arguments, he made me no longer appear ſo little in my own eyes; I was again reſtored to my ſpeech, and forgave him the entertainment he took in it.

My eyes were ſo well amuſed, that I was ſorry when we ſtopped at the houſe which my lord told me was my own. The rooms, after the ſpacious manſion I had left, appeared ſmall; but were elegant and pretty: and as I had regretted the loſs of the country ſcenes I had left behind, my lord informed me, that, as far as was in his power, he had ſupplied the want of them, having choſen a houſe ſo ſituated, that the back-rooms looked into St. James's Park.

My lord ſpent the evening with me, acquainting me with the number of my family, which conſiſted only of one maid, beſides her I brought out of the country, and one footman.

As we entered the houſe, I obſerved a kind of box, much ornamented, which attracted my notice, and excited my curioſity after the uſe of it. This, I was informed, was a ſedan-chair; which, that nothing might be wanting to my convenience, had been beſpoke before I came to town. My lord told me it was to be my equipage, and ſhewed cloaths for the chairmen, in the ſame livery as my footman, which differed from his lordſhip's; and being left in it to his own fancy, was the neateſt and genteeleſt livery I have ever ſeen.

When Lord Dorcheſter departed, being a good deal fatigued with the length of our journey, I went directly to bed; nor could all the novelty which had amuſed my mind keep me awake. But ſweet as my ſlumbers were, I could not not long enjoy them: ſudden noiſes in the ſtreets awaked me in a terror. I imagined that a dead ſilence was the conſtant attendant on night; and having ſat in a room that looked into the park till I went to bed, I had not been undeceived in this particular. A moderate noiſe perhaps would have paſſed unheard by me, ſo ſoundly I ſlept; but ſome people engaged in a quarrel, were ſo clamorous under my chamber-windows, as muſt have rouzed even Somnus himſelf. My fright was ſo great, that I found myſelf at the window before I was ſenſible I had left my bed: the noiſe naturally

tirally drew me thither, in order to diſcover the occaſion of it. The crowd I beheld increaſed my fears to a height that rendered me motionleſs; but I was ſoon relieved by ſeeing them move down the ſtreet, till they were loſt both to my ſight and hearing.

When the danger was paſt, which I imagined had threatened me, I endeavoured to compoſe my ſpirits, and return to my bed: but reſt was no longer to be found there. The hour was come for the return of all my gay neighbours to their houſes, which was proclaimed with a noiſe that could not fail of diſturbing the ſober part of the neighbourhood. The peculiarity of a footman's rap ſtartled me very much: I at firſt fancied ſome ſtrange diſaſtrous diſtreſs muſt be the occaſion of ſo great a noiſe; but on more exact obſervation, and hearing exactly the ſame ſort of knocking at different doors, I began to diſcover an art in it ill-ſuited to any ſuch cauſe. Having no notion of any other end of knocking at a door than to make one's ſelf heard, I could not ſuppoſe theſe flouriſhes were uſed for ſo plain and ſimple an intent; and at laſt convinced myſelf that it muſt be one of the pleaſures of a people whom I thought capricious enough to be capable of any thing that was ridiculous. This led me to ſome very ſevere reflections on the hearts of thoſe who could indulge themſelves in ſo fooliſh an amuſement, at a time of night when they muſt give great diſturbance to perſons who kept regular hours, and might prove very hurtful to the ſick. I then had recourſe to all my learning; and, with the ignorance of many cenſorious politicians, deſpiſed the legiſlature which admitted ſuch teazing follies; and by drawing compariſons between this neglect of order and the accounts I had read of the governments of ſome other kingdoms, found, in the diſturbance of my reſt, good reaſon to quarrel with our conſtitution. Many of thoſe who inveigh moſt ſtrongly againſt it, perhaps cannot aſſign a better. But as politicks, though enlivened by anger and cenſure, will, without oppoſition, become languid and dull, my wife and ſevere reflections grew compoſing, and I again fell into a ſweet ſlumber. Sleep now ſeemed inclined to treat me like a ſtranger, not with the careleſs dull manner of an old acquaintance, letting me be loſt in inſenſibility; but, ſparing no endeavours for my entertainment, repreſented to me the cottage which had ſo long ſheltered my youth; gave me to my beloved aunt's embraces, whoſe joy was beyond utterance, and to be equalled only by my own. Lord Dorcheſter ſhewing, by his ſmiles, the pleaſure he received from our tranſports, and declaring himſelf rewarded by the ſatisfaction we enjoyed for the journey he had taken to reſtore me to her, begged leave to remain a conſtant ſpectator of our mutual affection. In this pleaſing deception was I entranced, only to be more afflicted by this unquiet town; for all the ſweet deluſion was at once put to flight by a rap at my door with a club, as if deſigning to break it open, accompanied with a hollow voice, which, though loud, was unintelligible to me.

I believe I was the more frighted for the quiet I had, in imagination, enjoyed. All I had hitherto felt was little to my preſent terror. I ran to my maid's room, which was next to mine; and by catching hold of her, waked her. The fear impreſſed on my countenance communicated itſelf to her mind: ſhe was little able to inſpire me with any courage, till I made her underſtand the cauſe of my fear, by deſiring her to liſten to the dreadful voice which had alarmed me; but was now gone paſt my houſe, and accompanying the forcible attacks the club was making on other doors. It was with difficulty that reſpect, aſſiſted with a little peeviſhneſs at being ſo unneceſſarily diſturbed, reſtrained her from laughing at my fears. But, with all the civil gravity ſhe could aſſume, ſhe informed me of the nature of the grievance, and made me liſten to the words, which had appeared unintelligible to me, till I underſtood enough to be convinced that they concerned only the hour of the night, and the weather. I had not been inclined to believe this on her word, ſuſpecting ſhe meant only to deceive me into a quiet ſtate of mind; and thought her invention very poor, if it could furniſh her with nothing better than ſo ridiculous a pretence, as that people ſhould pay money to be told the hour and the ſtate of the weather, which, if they were aſleep, could not be of any conſequence to them; and if they were awake, they might learn with leſs clamour. My ears, and ſome better reaſons ſhe gave me for the inſtitution of watchmen, at laſt convinced me; and I left her

to finiſh her night's reſt, but not to mend mine; for the repetition of the paſt noiſes, and the variety of new ones which ſucceeded them, ſoon overcame my hopes of ſleep; and I quitted all endeavours after it with my bed, ſpending the reſt of the night in reading and meditation.

CHAP. XVIII.

I Had long been well acquainted with the firſt dawnings of day; but was now, for the firſt time, deprived of the ſight of the riſing ſun, when clouds did not conceal it from human eyes: it was an object that always delighted me. Nor had I been accuſtomed to behold the morning-light with heavy eye-lids, and fatigued ſpirits, which want of ſleep now made me experience. But as the deſire of looking on a more agreeable ſcene than a narrow ſtreet, had led me into the dining-room, from whence I had the view of the park, wearineſs of body and mind tempted me to lie down on a ſopha, which made part of the furniture of the room; and here, my ſituation being much quieter, I enjoyed a little reſt, which ſufficiently refreſhed me.

The ſight of a great town cannot but amuſe a girl bred in ſolitude: the concourſe of people in the ſtreets was a ſtrange appearance; all the world ſeemed abroad. I fancied the people were at once ſeized with an inability of ſitting ſtill. But though all I ſaw excited my wonder, yet it did not ſufficiently engage my attention to prevent my growing impatient for Lord Dorcheſter's company. I had long been accuſtomed to ſee him every hour: to paſs a whole day abſent from him was miſery. I watched at the window, in painful expectation of his arrival, till evening robbed me of the power of diſtinguiſhing objects. In this uneaſy ſtate of mind, I ſometimes feared ſome accident had befallen him, or that he was ſick; at others, I apprehended a ſtill greater evil, that the want of deſire, not the want of power, to viſit me, occaſioned his long abſence. This thought brought me a relief from tears, that enabled me to combat the evils my imagination had raiſed: but, before ſeven o'clock, I had a better conſolation; for, at laſt, Lord Dorcheſter's coach ſtopped at my door.

My ſpirits were ſo much ſunk with the pains of impatience, that I could not receive him with that joy in my countenance which the pleaſure he ſhewed in ſeeing me deſerved. He flew up ſtairs with ſuch rapidity, that there was not a moment's ſpace between the ſtopping of his coach at the door and his entering the dining-room.

He approached me with inexpreſſible tenderneſs, complaining of the tediouſneſs of every minute of his abſence, and of the cruel circumſtances which had deprived him of a poſſibility of coming to me till then.

Having inſolence enough to be piqued at not ſeeing him earlier in the day, I replied, that it muſt be almoſt impoſſible to many people to deprive themſelves of amuſements and good company, without they had a ſtronger inducement than a charitable deſire of relieving the ſolitude, and enlivening the mind, of one who could return them no entertainment to recompenſe them for the ſacrifice they made to their humanity; and, as I preferred his happineſs to my own, I was glad he had not endeavoured at ſo difficult a taſk. My eyes, I believe, expreſſed ſome reſentment; but they were not free from gathering tears, which ſhewed my grief was at leaſt equal to my anger. He, in return, reproached me for my inhumanity in giving him ſuch a reception. Was the pleaſure, he ſaid, which he had been longing for all day, turned into the mortification of finding me offended with him, for the moſt cruel diſappointment he had ever experienced. He proteſted, that he had never ſo ardently wiſhed for my company; and was incapable of receiving pleaſure from any thing elſe. He then related the vexatious circumſtances by which he had been prevented from coming ſooner; gave me ſuch ſtrong aſſurances of his affection by words, and ſo much ſtronger ſtill in the ſilent language of his eyes, that I could not reſiſt ſuch teſtimony: the moſt obſtinate incredulity could not ſtand before the tenderneſs ſo viſible in his expreſſive countenance.

The perverſe temper in which Lord Dorcheſter had found me, ſerved the more to recommend the good-humour that ſucceeded it. For want of a little interruption, it had begun to appear an habitual eaſineſs; and that, though always convenient, muſt ceaſe to be meritorious, when it is diſcovered to be involuntary. Beſides, my peeviſhneſs ſhewed him, as well

well as myſelf, how neceſſary his company was to my happineſs: a circumſtance that could not but be agreeable to him; and could not be painful to me, while every wiſh was gratified by his preſence, and the charms of his converſation left no room for reflection.

We both complained of having been ſo long ſeparated; and the joy we ſhewed in each other's company proved that neither had exaggesated in the deſcription of what each had ſuffered for want of it. Conſcious of no motive that required concealment, and ignorant of the cuſtoms of the world, I ſaw no reaſon for expatiating leſs upon my uneaſineſs on that ſubject than on any other. I knew not that the world would have allowed me to have grieved for the loſs of a parrot, to have been wretched at miſſing a maſquerade, miſerable at being deprived of the ſight of a new opera, or diſtreſſed to the laſt degree at being diſappointed of the principal part of the company at an approaching drum; but would never have forgiven me for declaring my regret for the loſs of the moſt agreeable companion that ſociety could afford me, if that companion happened not to be of my own ſex. I by no means apprehended that to declare I was pleaſed with the converſation, and touched with the affection, of one tenderly attached to me, was an offence to decency, if the perſon did not wear the ſame ſort of dreſs as myſelf. What my heart innocently felt, I thought my tongue might irreproachably utter; and accordingly, in the fulneſs of my heart, ſpoke as frankly as my lord, and with all the eloquent warmth of truth, deſcribing the painful ſenſations and melancholy reflections to which his abſence had given riſe, as well as the ſatisfaction in their being at an end, which recompenſed me for all the paſt ſufferings. Bleſſings, by long poſſeſſion, grow ſo familiar, that we at laſt become inſenſible of their worth, though they influence our whole lives, and conſtitute our felicity. We ſcarcely reflect on the uſe of the Sun, unleſs ſome withering plantation, that has been deprived of his kindly rays, reminds us how neceſſary he is to all exiſtence.

We knew not how to part again, ſince, when once aſunder, it was in the power of perverſe circumſtances to keep us ſo; and much of the night was ſpent before Lord Dorcheſter could prevail on himſelf to leave me.

CHAP. XIX.

I Had not been many days in London before Lord Dorcheſter deſired I would ſuffer him to introduce me to Lady Paleſtine, a relation of his, whoſe houſe was the rendezvous of all the polite people in town, and where he aſſured me I ſhould be well entertained.

The vivacity of my temper made me incline to novelty and amuſement; and therefore I readily acquieſced. A day was fixed; and I was dreſſed with the utmoſt elegance, and at no inconſiderable expence. As faſhion, not fancy, was to be my guide, I left the care of adorning my perſon to my maid, who exhauſted her art; and I dare ſay I ſhould have beheld the effects of her labours with ſome complacency, had I not been apprehenſive of being gazed at for the uncommonneſs of my education; an impertinence by which I had ſufficiently ſuffered on my firſt arrival at Lord Dorcheſter's: and, indeed, in my road to it, theſe fears made me more diſpoſed to find faults than beauties in my perſon. But my vanity taking alarm at this ſudden fit of humility, brought Lord Dorcheſter to it's aid; who ſo ſtrengthened it's party, that I promiſed, with pretty good courage, to follow him to Lady Paleſtine's, where he was to go before, in order to be in readineſs to introduce me.

Nothing had ſo much contributed to make me eaſy as his lordſhip's aſſurances that no one but Lady Paleſtine knew any thing of me; nor would ever learn from her, more than that I was a young woman to whom he was guardian, and therefore I had no reaſon to apprehend any obſervation but what my perſon excited: and he aſſured me that my dreſs and air were ſo conformable to thoſe of the reſt of the world, that there was no room to ſuſpect I had ever been ſecluded from it.

My lord did not explain to me what was generally underſtood by the word Guardian; but mentioning it as a common thing, had I conceived any doubts about the propriety of my ſituation, he would thereby have removed them; but I was far from imagining that being under the care of a gentleman, however young and agreeable he might be, was any indecorum. I did not ſuſpect any one of inclining to a vice of whoſe exiſtence I was totally ignorant; and if I had been in that particular better informed, I ſhould have thought

thought nothing ſo great a ſecurity as being under a man's peculiar care and protection. Some knowledge of the world was neceſſary to make me believe any one could wiſh to injure another. Long experience only convinced me, that a man could think of injuring one whom he was bound by every tie of real honour and humanity to defend: nor could leſs have taught me, that men who act with the ſtricteſt integrity to their own ſex, ſhould imagine themſelves leſs obliged to do ſo by our's, when they acknowledge that nature, by giving us greater gentleneſs of mind, and more delicacy of body, makes us dependent on them; which cuſtom has, through policy, not only confirmed but increaſed.

But it is time to end reflections, which will be thought the dregs of my recluſe education, and deſpiſed as vulgar and puritanical by the free and *polite* world, who are above ſuch low reſtraints as I may be willing to recommend. I ſhall therefore proceed with my ſtory.

With ſome palpitation of heart, I went to Lady Paleſtine. I knew ſhe was to have company; and the expectation of ſeeing, perhaps, a dozen of people together, diſcompoſed that aukward baſhfulneſs which was the conſequence of the ſolitude I had lived in; but the flutter of my ſpirits was turned into a real terror on the ſervant's throwing open the door of the firſt room, which expoſed to my view ſuch a concourſe of people as I had never ſeen, nor aſſembled together in imagination. I turned my back upon them; and fear being given as the beſt defence to the weaker part of the creation, was determined to run down ſtairs as faſt as I could; but Lord Dorcheſter, who waited juſt by the door, though in a fright I had overlooked him, caught hold of my hand, and then endeavoured to ſtop me, by giving me courage to encounter the eyes of ſo large a company. He laviſhed upon me that beſt cordial to drooping vanity, flattery; and undertook to perſuade me to endure to be looked at, by aſſuring me that I muſt be the object of the admiration of every one who beheld me; and that if I found myſelf more gazed at than the reſt of the company, I might be certain it was from being more admired. This argument has reconciled many women to univerſal obſervation; but, with one educated as I had been, baſhfulneſs muſt be proof againſt it: however, he urged one motive that inſpired me with courage to follow him up the room, which was ſhewing him how much I ſhould oblige him by doing ſo. To give him pleaſure, I could have performed more dangerous adventures, though the paſſing through ſuch multitudes appeared very tremendous.

When Lady Paleſtine ſaw me, ſhe came towards us, and received me in the moſt obliging manner; ſpoke in the higheſt ſtrain in praiſe of my perſon, and thanked my lord for giving her the pleaſure of my acquaintance. This flow of politeneſs I received aukwardly enough: I was at that time, by confuſion, rendered as incapable, as I was unqualified by nature, for returning ſuch compliments. Expreſſions of good-will, that I knew were dictated by truth, my heart could acknowledge, and therefore my tongue could repay; but her ladyſhip ſoared above my humble conceptions.

As the largeneſs of the aſſembly made the ſphere of Lady Paleſtine's care and attention very extenſive, ſhe could not devote any great portion of her time to one perſon; therefore I had ſufficient leiſure to indulge my curioſity by obſerving the company: for, though my lord did not go to any great diſtance from me, yet he was ſo engaged in converſation with all the people around him, that he did not interrupt my obſervations. There was ſomething ſo affectionate in the addreſs of moſt of the company to each other, that I was happy to find the people among whom fortune had thrown me were ſo inclined to friendſhip. I conceived a very favourable impreſſion of the whole ſociety; but was particularly pleaſed with one lady, for her lively and affectionate expreſſions of joy at meeting with another; and found myſelf ſo attracted by the amiable diſpoſition I thought I diſcovered in her, that when ſhe left that dear friend, I could not help following her to the next: but how was I ſurprized to hear her, after practiſing the ſame addreſs, complain of the penance ſhe had undergone in being obliged to ſuffer, for a whole quarter of an hour, the converſation of the lady ſhe had left with all the tokens of regret! A ſecret horror at ſuch falſehood took place of my beginning attachment, and I flew from her as from a wild beaſt, I believe too, with a like terror in my countenance; for Lord Dorcheſter, whoſe eyes were always on me, enquired the cauſe. The manner in which I related it, ſhewed how much it affected me,

and

and I was amazed to ſee him ſmile at it. I could not forbear aſking him, why he choſe to aſſociate me with ſo vile a ſet of people; for ſurely they would ſcruple no crimes who could unneceſſarily be guilty of ſuch flagrant falſhoods. Nor was I better contented when he told me, theſe were expreſſions uſed by every one, but believed by nobody; mere words of courſe. This made no difference in my opinion, but by giving me reaſon to add the charge of abſurdity, in thus directing the only end of ſpeech to the crime of inſincerity: it ſeemed to me a method of ranking ourſelves with the dumb part of the creation, in ſpite of nature: all the diſtinction was, that thoſe nature made ſo, could not pronounce words; and the others rendered themſelves ſo by uttering no meaning. I could not poſſibly allow, that the obligation of joining in ſociety, required any more of us, than to bury our diſlikes in ſilence; to conceal a truth, which, if known, may hurt, and can be of no ſervice, may be a duty; but to pretend an affection we do not feel, I eſteemed criminal; and to expreſs what we know will not, and what we did not intend ſhould be believed, appeared to me an exceſſive folly. The diſguſt this little incident gave me, made me attend leſs to the converſation, and conſequently more to the perſons of the company: a change that was not at all to my eaſe; for I now found I had every one's eye upon me; wherever I placed myſelf, I was the principal object; to move was to little purpoſe; the eyes might be different, but they were ſtill alike fixed on me. The gentlemen were more particularly troubleſome in this reſpect. If I ſat down in hopes of hiding myſelf, it only drew them nearer, leſt any one ſhould ſcreen me from their ſight. My uneaſineſs was viſible in my countenance; for I heard one gentleman ſay to three or four others—'Come away: it is cruel 'to put any one ſo much out of counte-'nance.'—'That may be,' anſwered another; 'but it would be more cruel to 'myſelf to comply with a baſhfulneſs 'that adorns her.'

All the flattery with which Lord Dorcheſter had endeavoured to arm me againſt the effects of ſuch general obſervations, had now no longer power over my mind. I could not perſuade myſelf that I attracted the notice of the company by any thing but a ſtrangeneſs in my air and manner; and I was the more convinced of it by the contemptuous glances of many young ladies.

My lord had informed me, that ſome ill-natured, and ſome ill-judging people, would deſpiſe others for their unavoidable ignorance of the follies of the world, though the knowledge of them could have no good tendency. Theſe ſigns of undeſerved contempt gave me no favourable impreſſion of the ladies; yet I liked them better than the reſt of the company: they looked leſs pleaſed indeed; but then they looked leſs at me; and that fully recompenſed me for their ſcorn.

I at laſt got Lord Dorcheſter to approve my going home, and he immediately followed me; but found me ſo much humbled, that I was quite dull. To cure me of my humility was, therefore, much his intereſt; and he laboured hard to perſuade me into the belief he had before tried to inſpire; and, to convince me, deſired I would another time obſerve the difference between my complexion and thoſe of the reſt of the ladies: I was not ſo humble as to have overlooked that circumſtance; I had perceived a great deadneſs in the beſt complexions in the room; and as I did not ſuppoſe there could be any thing very particular in mine, fancied it a ſtrange effect of the light, till various opportunities ſhewed me the contrary. This advantage I could never attribute to any thing but having always kept ſuch early hours, as Nature ſeems to have deſigned; having lived continually in the air, though not much expoſed to the ſun; and on ſo very ſpare a diet, as, by giving me the pureſt blood imaginable, might communicate an extraordinary clearneſs to my ſkin.

I ſoon forgot the uneaſineſs I had undergone. Lord Dorcheſter's converſation baniſhed every painful thought; and the pleaſure he ſeemed to have received from my appearance recompenſed me for what I had ſuffered for it.

Lady Paleſtine returned my viſit the next morning; and invited Lord Dorcheſter and myſelf to dine with her the day following, without any other company. She was ſo eaſy in her converſation, and courted my acquaintance ſo politely, that in a few days we became what the world calls intimate; that is, we ſaw each other often, and converſed with freedom and chearfulneſs. I found no inclination to a real attachment to her: ſhe was rather amuſing than engaging; ſhe

she had a good deal of wit; but dissipation had robbed her of her judgment. She was the life of a circle; but a dull companion *tête a tête*; and, as if she was sensible of this, she avoided them as much as possible, and delighted in a crowd. Her greatest happiness was a general acquaintance: a blessing to which she had attained.

CHAP. XX.

YOUR ladyship perhaps begins to wonder, that Lord Dorchester, with the views which you will suppose he had, would introduce me to a woman of fashion, where I might gain a knowledge of the world, which, if it did not corrupt me, might frustrate his designs by discovering them to me. That I may not leave this improbability on your mind, till the course of my narration clears it up, I will venture the discovery, and inform you now, of what I long remained ignorant. For the manner in which I at last came by the knowledge, you must wait till the course of my story leads me to it.

Lady Palestine, I have already said, was a woman of wit, and of considerable rank; but her fortune was by no means equal to her splendid way of life. At fifteen she was married to an old man, who, as he did not gain her affections, could not greatly influence the conduct of a woman, who had been better instructed in politeness than in prudence. Lord Palestine's fondness made her mistress of herself from the day of her marriage.

The natural vivacity of her temper, and the dislike to a companion of an age so ill suited to her own, led her into all the dissipations which the gay world affords. Her beauty, with the other favourable circumstances of her situation, attracted the other sex. No woman had more admirers; naturally vain and lively, all received encouragement; and few who strongly attached themselves to her could complain of her cruelty: however, as my lord was pleased, the world was too obliging to take offence. The good-natured, in silence pitied her errors; the censorious, expecting a speedy rupture from her bad conduct, did not think mere anticipation worthy the attention of persons accustomed to the more ingenious exercise of invention; and as the consequences they expected from her irregularity, made her less the object of their envy than women of a less blameable behaviour, they thought her an unworthy subject of discourse, and neglected her. Every one indeed called her imprudent, but were not the less desirous of her acquaintance, since she gave entertainments, had great drums, and every kind of diversion at her house. Astræa, with all her virtue, were she now to come upon earth, could not attract such multitudes as a card-table. People censure the pleasures only of those who will not impart to others the means of being pleased. If a woman has assurance enough not to be ashamed of infamy, and a fortune to afford every fashionable expence, the world may blame her ill conduct, but it will not desert her; while they censure her behaviour, they will court her acquaintance. I have learnt, that nothing is a crime in polite circles, but poverty and prudence. A person who cannot contribute to the follies of others, may perhaps be pardoned if she only complies with them; but if she attempts to be rational, she must not hope for forgiveness.

It is supposed, that Lord Palestine at last grew less infatuated than he had been; for at his death, which happened when his lady was about twenty-five years of age, he left her but little more than her jointure of six hundred pounds per annum, and his London house, furniture, and jewels. This appeared to a woman of her ladyship's spirit, a poor despicable pittance: it would have obliged her to have lessened her pleasures; and if she had a proper sense of the consequences of retrenching, it must be allowed a serious consideration, since the splendour in which she had lived, had been the only means of preserving her from contempt and neglect.

She could find but one resource against the evils that threatened her. As she was young, and in high reputation for her wit and beauty, she thought it not impossible, for once, to reconcile pleasure and interest, and accordingly made those for whom she relinquished the esteem of mankind give her the means of purchasing their civility and outward respect. She was too engaging to fail of success to this point: her wit and politeness for a long time excused the decay of her beauty; and, supplying by art the depredations of time, she was not destitute of admirers, even when I was introduced to her acquaintance, though she was then above fifty

years

years old. Faſhion was a charm of which age had not robbed her, and continued to attract many years after I knew her: but as this was not quite ſo univerſal a magnet as youth and beauty, ſhe found the effects in a diminution of lovers, and therefore was not averſe to receiving advantage from the love of which ſhe was not the object.

Lord Dorcheſter had been one of her train, more from faſhion and indolence than from inclination; and, as he knew money had no more charms for her than love, he made little ſcruple of acquainting her with his paſſion for me, and of the means he intended to purſue. He wiſhed to have me introduced into the world, as he thought it might both improve and amuſe me: he knew not how to do this without running a hazard of my learning more of it than was conſiſtent with his ſcheme, except by the means of ſomebody who would concur with him in the execution, and yet was on ſuch a footing in the world, that her acquaintance would not place me in a bad light; for his lordſhip did not chuſe that any perſon ſhould have reaſon to think ill of me but himſelf. No one could be ſo proper for this purpoſe as Lady Paleſtine. She knew my lord's generoſity too well to decline the office, and complied with the plan he directed, though ſhe diſapproved it.

She told Lord Dorcheſter, that, in her opinion, he would be more certain of ſucceſs by making me acquainted with all the cuſtoms of mankind; by treating *vulgar prejudices* as they deſerved; and ſhewing me how much more happy they were who ſet themſelves above ſuch *a low way of thinking*, than thoſe *narrow-minded* people who were governed by them. She offered to aſſiſt him in this manner, which ſhe eſteemed much the beſt: but his lordſhip differed in opinion. He replied, that what ſhe ſaid might be true, had I been educated in as great ignorance of vice and virtue, as of the cuſtoms of mankind; but that, on the contrary, I was as much better acquainted with the one, as I was leſs ſo with the other, than thoſe who are bred in the world: that he was convinced I ſhould deteſt him, was I to perceive his principles were leſs pure than my own; whereas he now had reaſon to believe he had made ſome impreſſion on my heart; and that, as I was free from ſuſpicion, he could not but ſuppoſe he ſhould find opportunities from my innocence and love, which he might improve; and that all the effects he wiſhed from introducing me into the world, was the diſſipating my thoughts, leſt too much reflection might teach me ſome guard againſt him.

Lady Paleſtine had ſo great a ſenſe of female frailty, ſhe could not think Lord Dorcheſter's ſcheme abſolutely impracticable, and readily agreed to obey his commands; though an intimacy with me was not very deſirable, as it could not be cultivated in a crowd. A gay party at ſupper was her greateſt pleaſure; but in them I might have ſeen more of the world than was thought adviſeable, eſpecially as converſation was apt to take a free turn at her ladyſhip's houſe: however, ſhe ſacrificed a few hours to my lord and me, excluding others. At her largeſt aſſemblies I was judged ſafe enough; for, though I there fell into converſation with many people, eſpecially the gentlemen, (for they were moſt watchful for opportunities of ſpeaking to me) and I was not more reſerved to them than to my own ſex; yet decorum ſecured me from the freedom of converſation, to which her ladyſhip admitted them. She was likewiſe graciouſly pleaſed to carry me to publick places.

The firſt I appeared at was a play. No one was admitted into the box to us but Lord Dorcheſter, who excluded all others that I might not confine the emotions ſo new a ſight would raiſe in me. My lord had often read to me ſome of Shakeſpeare's hiſtorical plays; and it was to one of theſe he carried me, never chuſing I ſhould go to any others; and he gave me ſo poor a character of the performances of many of the other dramatick poets, that I never felt a deſire of ſeeing them, though by the play-bills I found there was great variety.

Had my lord's only view been my entertainment, in this he would have acted judiciouſly. I have been convinced by obſervation, that plays and novels vitiate the taſte: I allow many of them to be extremely diverting, ſome very fine; but, by the multiplicity of events, mixed with a good deal of the marvellous, they teach the mind a diſſipation even in reading. The ſimple chain of facts in hiſtory appears ill to a perſon uſed to wonder; as moral truths, and ſound reaſon do, to one who has been accuſtomed to the turns and quibbles of falſe wit, the enchanting jingle of rhime, or the pompous ſound of high-flown metaphors.

Not that I would exclude the reading of ſuch authors as I mention. I am not inſenſible to the charms of poetry; perhaps was I more ſo, I might not think it ſo unfit for young people: but I look upon it as dangerous, before maturity has fixed ſome degree of taſte, ſome ſteadineſs of thought and principle, as it is apt to render them ever after uninclined to ſuch ſtudies as are uſeful, and of more laſting entertainment. In ſhort, I eſteem ſuch reading as bad for the mind, as high meats are for the ſtomach: they may create a falſe appetite, but will pall a true one, and make all proper food appear inſipid, till, by long uſe, they even grow tireſome; and the true appetite being vitiated, all alike diſguſt.

The very little I heard of ſuch performances, pleaſed me for the time; but being ſeldom, and of ſhort duration, they did not dwell enough on my mind to lead me into any compariſon between the entertainment they afforded me, and what I received from my common ſtudies; they amuſed without diſſipating. Lord Dorcheſter diſpenſed them as a cordial to my ſpirits, when he perceived them inclined to ſuffer from the melancholy reflections which would occur too frequently, as my aunt could not be long out of my thoughts. However, greatly as I had been entertained by the plays I had heard, there was ſomething ſo much more lively in the repreſentation of them on the theatre, as at firſt delighted me extremely. I had heard many of the ſpeeches much more to advantage when my lord read them; but, in the acting, the whole received ſuch an air of truth, that I could ſcarcely diſbelieve a fact in it. This made my agitations almoſt as ſtrong as if I had been the ſpectator of a real tragedy. The play was Macbeth; and Lord Dorcheſter and Lady Paleſtine were ſufficiently taken up in obſerving the paſſions impreſſed on my countenance. They told me, I might more properly be ſaid to act the play than ſome of the perſons on the ſtage. Indeed, I believe I was more fatigued with my part of the repreſentation; for, when it was over, I found my mind quite weary with the agitation it had been in. Anger was one of the paſſions that had been excited; for I could not bear with patience the noiſes that were ſometimes made; and was ſo entirely engaged, that I could not utter a rational ſentence on any other ſubject, even between the acts. Nor did the change of ſcene change my ideas; for, after I went home, they continued as much fixed on the play as during the repreſentation; and it was almoſt with difficulty they at laſt gave place to ſleep.

CHAP. XXI.

LADY Paleſtine invited me the next day to a private party of a few friends. I would modeſtly have declined the invitation; for not being a general friend to the company, I felt myſelf unworthy of a place among them, and expreſſed a fear of being a troubleſome reſtraint on their converſation. She ſmiled at this notion, but inſiſted on my coming. I could not help anticipating, in my imagination, the pleaſure I ſhould receive from the variety of converſation ſo noble and extenſive an union muſt afford, where each perſon could venture to declare every thought, and give vent even to their follies: for I had been taught by my lord, the neceſſity of being guarded in what we ſay before any but moſt intimate friends and to this I attributed the extreme trimmigneſs of all the converſation at which I had been preſent.

I went to Lady Paleſtine's at the appointed time; and though there were fewer people than I had ever ſeen when ſhe admitted company, yet I was inclined to envy her ſo many ſelect friends; for there was about twenty in number.

My expectation being raiſed, I was all attention; but, to my great ſurprize, the converſation extended no farther than the weather, and their engagements, during the interval between their arrival and their being properly diſpoſed to their ſeparate tables; for I then learnt, that even in friendly ſocieties, cards were a neceſſary ingredient.

Not doubting but converſation would ſhare their time, I, by turns, attended every table, but found that the game was the only topick. One held the *cruelleſt* cards, another the *pleaſanteſt* hand; thoſe who won moſt part of the night no ſooner ſeemed to be threatened with a reverſe of fortune than they declared there was no playing againſt lady ſuch a one; ſhe always won: another equally unſucceſsful added, *ſome people* had ſtrange good luck: for her part, ſhe found her cards would ſometimes be bad; but *ſome people* could make them win, whether they were bad or good. The winners enjoyed their good

fortune

fortune in ſilence, or told you how much they had loſt the night before. When it grew late, this ſelect ſociety broke up; and ſhewing that cards, not friendſhip, had drawn them together, withdrew as ſoon as they aroſe from the table: ſome exulting with the reflection of having won their friends money; others out of humour at having loſt their own; but none, I believe, ſo diſappointed as myſelf, who had imagined a far different entertainment; not having then learnt, that a party which does not by it's numbers deſerve to be honoured with the name of a drum, is entitled a private party of a few friends, I ſuppoſe by way of expreſſing it's *inſignificance*.

As I frequently met the ſame company at Lady Paleſtine's, I ſoon became acquainted with many of them, eſpecially of the other ſex, none of whom pleaſed me ſo well as Sir Charles Liſdale. His perſon had no particular charms. He was genteel, and looked like a man of faſhion; otherwiſe plain enough. But he was extremely lively, had a great deal of wit and politeneſs, and ſhewed a particular regard for me, by great attention, reſpect, and a conſtant attendance; for he followed me about like my ſhadow, and, when I was preſent, appeared inſenſible to every other perſon in company. His eyes ſeemed only given him to look at me, and his ears to hear no words but what I uttered; his whole converſation was directed to me.

Ought I to be aſhamed of owning that I was pleaſed with Sir Charles's behaviour? Does it ſhew a ſpirit of coquetry to like to be approved? Surely not. I thought not of love, nor conſidered him as a lover; but my baſhfulneſs found great relief from perceiving him well diſpoſed to be pleaſed with what I ſaid: his partiality made me leſs careful in weighing my words, and this eaſe rendered his converſation particularly agreeable to me. There is great ſatisfaction in having the liberty of talking nonſenſe without incurring the contempt of our hearers; and, perhaps, people never appear to more advantage than when they dare give the reins to their imagination and vivacity, and leave to others the care of being wiſe.

Another merit in Sir Charles Liſdale was, that he did not ſurfeit me with compliments; and, when he made me any, there was always an elegance and variety in them, a circumſtance of which the converſation of many of his ſex could not boaſt. Their fulſome flattery diſguſted me; I could not liſten to people who had forſworn all truth. Beſides, my pride was offended in their ſuppoſing me ſo weak as to believe what they ſaid, and endeavouring to render themſelves agreeable, by addreſſing my vanity inſtead of my reaſon, till I obſerved that they treated others a good deal in the ſame manner; for that they did not talk in quite ſo high a ſtrain to them, I imagined was from expecting leſs credulity in perſons of more mature years, and not ſo new to the world as they muſt perceive I was. But Sir Charles taught me to divert myſelf with theſe ridiculous compliments; and, after a time, I began to find amuſement in their folly.

I had one or two danglers who were well ſtricken in years, and afforded me more entertainment than any; they deified me with ſo much nonſenſe and bombaſt, that I ſometimes could ſcarcely underſtand them; and they would beg for a ſmile ſo much like a ſtreet beggar for an alms, that my generoſity generally exceeded their demands; for I was terribly apt to give them an ungrateful laugh, inſtead of a gracious ſimper; which diſcompoſed their tempers ſtill more than my features, and excited a reſentment that was not ſoon cooled. However, whether languiſhing or angry, theſe ancient gentlemen were leſs diſagreeable to me than many young ones, whoſe ſelf-ſatisfied air was more odious than their nonſenſe. They ſeemed ſo ſure of pleaſing, that they could not but offend. We cannot well endure people who demand our approbation as their due, and look as if they would bully us into a liking. A lover who would ſucceed, ſhould not behave like a highwayman, and attempt to obtain our hearts, as he would our purſes, by only crying 'Deliver!' They ſhould conſider, that as all the fire of aſſurance they can put into their eyes will not make them ſo dangerous as a piſtol, they may with leſs hazard be reſiſted. They ſhould, at leaſt, accept our hearts as a favour. There is a pleaſure in obliging, which makes us love thoſe who give us an opportunity of exerting that power.

I could perceive that Lord Dorcheſter and Sir Charles Liſdale did not greatly like each other. Sir Charles, I imagined, might be actuated by envy, which I found was a common vice in this country. It ſeemed ſtrange to me, that any

one ſhould envy when they might imitate; and thereby not only remove the ſuperiority that renders them uneaſy, but love the other, whoſe example led them into ſo happy a path. No perſon afflicted with an envious diſpoſition, can be ever happy. Our connections with others make us ſuffer by their ill qualities; how unfortunate muſt we then be, if we feel pain from their good ones!

Lord Dorcheſter was ſo ſuperior to Sir Charles, that I could not ſuſpect him of the ſame vice; nor indeed did I believe him capable of it, could he have met with one ſuperior to himſelf. But the laſt reaſon I ſhould have aſſigned for his diſlike was jealouſy; and, therefore, as I had ſuppoſed he had conceived ſome unjuſt prejudice, I laboured to remove it, by giving Sir Charles the praiſes I thought his due, and wondered that the more I ſpoke from his favour, the more averſe my lord ſeemed to him. This was very unlike his uſual politeneſs, which led him to ſee charms in every thing I approved. As he gave me no reaſon for his averſion, I was ſometimes almoſt angry, and could not forbear telling him he was very unjuſt.

I found that I ſhould have liked Sir Charles ſtill better, if my lord's taſte had concurred with mine. I could not but think mine was bad, ſince his would not give a ſanction to it; and if Sir Charles had not been too aſſiduous to leave it in my power, I believe I ſhould have declined his acquaintance; ſo much leſs agreeable was it rendered by my lord's diſapprobation. But this could not be done without incivility to Sir Charles; and not imagining it gave my lord any uneaſineſs, I continued to converſe with him, which I could not do without great pleaſure to myſelf.

My lord, at laſt, grew thoughtful and melancholy: he ſaw me ſeldomer; and oftener, when he was with me, would be ſilent, or converſe with little connection or chearfulneſs. If I expreſſed an uneaſineſs at a change of temper which I attributed to ſickneſs, he would make anſwer, that I could not, poſſibly be concerned about him; but, as he had no merit but love to engage my heart, he could not complain if I did not give him what he had no good title to. If I exerted all the eloquence of tenderneſs to aſſure him of my affection, and of my anxiety for his health, he would ſometimes appear revived, and tell me, that, if I really had any regard for him, he was well and happy. He would perhaps appear chearful for ſome hours after; but if he left me in that happier ſtate of mind, when we next met the air of melancholy returned.

CHAP. XXII.

WHILE Lord Dorcheſter, and conſequently his Ophelia, continued in this ſtate of uneaſineſs, Lady Paleſtine deſired me to go with her to an opera. As home became leſs agreeable, diſſipation grew more ſo, and I accepted her invitation with pleaſure. I had a good ear for muſick; and my lord had given me the beſt maſters to improve it, though I had not yet made any great proficiency, except in ſinging; for in that branch I had leſs to learn; nature having given me a voice, that your ladyſhip, (as well as many others, whom I muſt have allowed excellent judges, even if they had not flattered me) has often ſaid, did not require the help of art. As I was qualified to be entertained, it is not ſtrange that I was ſo, at a time when operas were in their higheſt perfection. Faſhion had no occaſion to aſſiſt the muſick towards delighting me; but, as I was a ſtranger to affectation, extaſies were not the conſequences of my being exceſſively pleaſed, and therefore I did not underſtand them in others.

My attention was interrupted, by ſeeing a lady who ſat next me in a moſt languiſhing condition. I thought her at her laſt gaſp, and did not doubt but ſhe was going into a fainting-fit. The houſe being extremely full, was very hot. To this I attributed her diſorder, in which ſhe ſeemed to have many companions; but, as ſhe appeared in the greateſt extremity, ſhe was the propereſt object of my care. Accordingly, in a flutter of haſte, I applied my ſmelling-bottle to her noſe, fearing the leaſt delay might find her paſt recovery. The bottle was filled with very ſtrong ſalts, and I was rejoiced to ſee their ſpeedy effect; for ſhe recovered in an inſtant, and opened her eyes with a great ſtart, and a look of amazement, which might be expected from their ſudden operation. But I was extremely ſurprized, that, inſtead of thanking me for my care and compaſſion, ſhe looked exceſſively angry, and, in a moſt uncivil manner and harſh voice, aſked me what I meant

I meant by ſuch impertinence. She then gave vent to her rage in ſuch a torrent of words, as raiſed my opinion of my ſalts, for having ſo immediately given ſuch great ſtrength of ſpirits to one before expiring, though the effect was not very agreeable; for ſhe did not leave me a poſſibility of explaining my good intention, nor ſhould I have had time to recover my ſurprize, if the ſalts had not taken a new turn, throwing her into a violent fit of ſneezing, which made very unlucky breaks in her diſcourſe, and thereby increaſed her anger. But 'muſick has 'charms to ſoothe a ſavage breaſt,' as I found; for her favourite ſinger coming on the ſtage, her wrath ſubſided; and, inſtead of the words 'impertinent! inſo-'lent!' &c. &c. ſhe could utter none but—'Oh, the charmer! the dear crea-'ture! raviſhing! enchanting!' and all that our language affords to the ſame purpoſe, with a mixture of 'karo! ka-'riſſimo!' Her reſentment was now buried in admiration, and all her ſenſes abſorbed by that of hearing.

While ſhe was thus engaged, Sir Charles informed me, that extaſy of pleaſure, not extremity of pain, occaſioned all thoſe languiſhments which had excited my compaſſion; and that her anger aroſe from my having interrupted her raptures, and, as ſhe ſuſpected, ridiculed them by that action. I think my ignorance never raiſed ſo many bluſhes in me as on this occaſion; I was really overcome with ſhame at my miſtake; till I reflected that ſhe had moſt reaſon to be ſo, ſince her behaviour was fooliſh affectation, mine only the effect of reaſonable compaſſion.

This incident, however, greatly interrupted the pleaſure I ſhould have received from the entertainment; and another, not leſs mortifying, was, that I did not ſee Lord Dorcheſter the whole evening, till at my return home. I then found he had been at the opera likewiſe, and could not forbear reproaching him for not being of our party, eſpecially as he once found a pleaſure in going with me to every place. His anſwer was, that he thought me too well engaged to have afforded him any of my converſation, had he attempted to come to us; and that it would not have been eaſy to have approached me, I was ſo encircled with gentlemen.

I replied, that this was a poor excuſe to hide his want of inclination; for he muſt know I would be engaged in no other converſation, when I had the power of enjoying his; and that a crowd muſt be great indeed, that did not leave one a poſſibility of making room for a perſon whom we eſteemed far above that whole crowd. All the anſwer I obtained was ſo broken with ſighs, ſo unconnected in itſelf, and ſpoken with ſuch an air of dejection, as touched me to the heart, though it did not ſpeak intelligibly enough for me to underſtand the occaſion of it.

In pity to his melancholy, I endeavoured to hide the effect it had on me, and tried every art to amuſe him. I ſung to him; I read to him; I attempted to lead him into converſation: but all to no purpoſe. When he looked moſt pleaſed with me, he ſeemed moſt oppreſſed; his ſpirits were too much ſunk to bear the tenderneſs of his mind, without an increaſe of dejection. When his eyes expreſſed the utmoſt fondneſs, they overflowed with grief. I begged to know the cauſe of his ſorrow; but he left me without ſatisfying a curioſity which aroſe only from affection.

The following day ſeemed to have made little alteration in the ſtate of Lord Dorcheſter's mind; but having promiſed Lady Paleſtine to make part of a very large company at her houſe that evening, we went thither at the proper hour.

The variety of objects and converſation diſpelled the gloom which oppreſſed my ſpirits before I left my own houſe. My melancholy was not proof againſt Sir Charles's vivacity, which even exceeded itſelf that night, and the evening paſſed away with great mirth. I ſpoke ſeveral times to my lord, but could obtain little anſwer. His grief affected me; but ſtill the natural gaiety of my temper, ſupported by all that could flatter my vanity, or amuſe my underſtanding, was not to be ſoon overcome. But, at length, no longer able to endure the ſight of his uneaſineſs, I determined to go home, if he would accompany me; in hopes that he would no longer conceal the cauſe of his affliction from importunities ariſing only from the deſire of endeavouring to alleviate it.

I went up to him, told him I was going to retire, and begged to know when he would follow me.

Judge of my ſurprize, when the man whom I had never heard utter any thing but the words of love and tenderneſs, anſwered

anſwered me in the ſharpeſt tone—'Ne-
'ver, Madam! If you want company,
'you have too good intereſt with many
'in the room to be denied theirs; you
'had better, therefore, change your ap-
'plication, and may depend on not be-
'ing impertinently interrupted by me.'

My amazement deprived me of ſpeech; and if it had not, it would have been of little uſe; for he gave me no time to anſwer him, leaving the room as ſoon as he had done ſpeaking. I was ſo much ſhocked, I had not power to follow him down ſtairs; as I certainly ſhould have expoſed myſelf by doing, had I been able. As my ſurprize abated, ſo my grief increaſed; it overcame me ſo entirely, that I believe I ſhould have ſunk on the floor, had not Sir Charles Liſdale perceived the change of my countenance, and offered his aſſiſtance; by which means I left the room, and got into my chair. He enquired, with kind concern, the occaſion of my diſorder; but perceiving me incapable of either hearing or ſpeaking, he ſupported me in ſilence too, and attended my chair to my own houſe, unſeen by me till I was carried into the hall. Seeing me ſurprized at his preſence, he excuſed it, by ſaying he could not forbear accompanying me, leſt the motion of the chair might make me ſtill worſe; nor could he be eaſy without knowing how I was on getting home. But he found me ſo little better, that he received no ſatisfaction from this ſecond view, and was ſtill more alarmed when he learned from my ſervant that ſhe had never ſeen me thus ſeized before.

Sir Charles intimated that he could not reſt without hearing how I did after I was put to bed; but my maid having more conſideration for me than for his eaſe, prudently told him that any noiſe might diſturb me; upon which he ſaid, that rather than run the leaſt hazard of that, he would endure his impatience and anxiety till morning.

The only relief I could now feel, was from being alone, that I might give an uninterrupted flow to my grief, which was indeed exceſſive. I had never before felt the anger of one I loved; and had learned to think nothing but tenderneſs and good-humour could fall from Lord Dorcheſter's lips. Sir Charles's ſervant watched the opening of the door the next morning; having been ordered not to knock, for fear of diſturbing my reſt. Alas! my night had all been ſpent in weeping. When my ſervant informed him that I was rather worſe than the evening before, having had no ſleep, he who had a real attachment to his maſter, ſaid, he knew not how to carry Sir Charles that account, for that he had not been able to go to bed all night; and he feared ſuch an addition to his anxiety might prove very hurtful to him. This, and the enquiries after my health ſent by ſuch of my acquaintance as obſerved that I was ill when I left Lady Paleſtine's, my maid repeated to me; for perceiving that grief was my diſorder, ſhe endeavoured as much as poſſible to divert my thoughts. Theſe attentions, from people for whom I had ſo ſmall a regard, in compariſon with my love for Lord Dorcheſter, made me the more ſhocked at his not ſending any enquiry after me, though I thought he could not be ignorant of the anxiety his words muſt occaſion. The reflection that I was in a new world, without a friend, unthought of by him, increaſed my affliction, as it gave me the worſe opinion of the man who could thus wound a heart ſo entirely his, when he knew I had no comforter into whoſe boſom I could pour my grief, whoſe tenderneſs could ſoothe, or care redreſs me. Was every one more kind than this man, who had ever before appeared ſo tender a friend! If I had been guilty of any fault to which my ignorance had ſubjected me, for I was conſcious of none towards him, might I not have expected an eaſy pardon from one to whom I had forgiven ſo great an injury as forcibly taking me from my aunt, whoſe temper could never make me feel ſuch agonies as his caprice now gave me. Theſe were my reflections the whole day; during which Sir Charles called himſelf ſeveral times at my door to enquire into the ſtate of my health, deſirous of a more particular account than he could expect by a ſervant. Towards evening a thought aroſe, that perhaps this great change in a diſpoſition which uſed to be unclouded, equally ſerene and pleaſing, might proceed from diſtemper. The poſſibility of this no ſooner ſtruck me, than I began to take myſelf to taſk for complaining of him, when I ought rather to pity, nurſe, and attend him. I now arraigned my own heart more bitterly than I had yet done his; and looking on my preſent apprehenſion as moſt afflicting, prayed,

that

that from whatever cauſe his unkindneſs aroſe, it might fall on me alone, that I only might ſuffer, and he be eaſy, though I was miſerable.

To quiet the preſent horrors of my mind, I ſent to his houſe to know how he did, and waited the return of my meſſenger with the impatience of diſtraction; which was rather changed than abated, by his bringing me word that my lord had been abroad the whole day. Notwithſtanding my imaginary diſintereſtedneſs, I ſeverely felt this proof of indifference. Not once to enquire the effect of his behaviour! not to comfort me with one kind word! was an exceſs of cruelty, which made me think ſuch a heart as mine, capable of the deepeſt impreſſions and ſtrongeſt ſenſations, very unfit to be in any degree linked with one who could be both ſo amiable and ſo cruel. Nor could night give any reſpite to my affliction.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE next day reduced me to envy the miſery of the day before, which I had then thought moſt deplorable. A letter being delivered to me, the ſight of his hand on the ſuperſcription revived my ſpirits, and ſpread joy over a heart before immerſed in ſorrow. I opened it with impatience, to ſee in how kind a manner he would at once ſign both his and my pardon. But, O heavens! how was I diſappointed! Your ladyſhip, who never met with the like trials, will, in imagining it, fall as ſhort of what I felt, as I ſhould do, if I endeavoured to deſcribe the ſhock I received at reading the following lines.

'A Cold addreſs but ill agrees with the 'love I have borne the once dear 'Ophelia; but it is ſuitable to the ſen-'timents I ſhall hereafter preſerve to-'ward thee. Oh, Ophelia! you have 'by deceit (I cannot call it ingratitude, 'for I could not demand a return) cured 'my heart of a weakneſs ſcarcely to be 'paralleled. But how painful is the re-'medy! I have doated on you to exceſs, 'and have been lulled into happineſs by 'the falſe appearances of your approv-'ing my love; but you have at laſt a-'waked me from this bliſsful dream, and 'ſhewn me that truth and conſtancy are 'not to be found in a female heart in 'any climate; that the levity of your 'ſex makes them a prey to the neweſt 'lover, and prefer the fluttering of a 'wit to the conſtant attachment of an 'affectionate heart. If this diſappoint-'ment to my fond hopes ſhould make 'me miſerable, it may puniſh me for my 'folly; but my reſentment ſhall never 'render me criminal towards you. I 'have brought you from a fixed habi-'tation, introduced you into a life of 'gaiety and pleaſure, to the charms of 'which you are ſenſible, if ever woman 'was. Your taſte is ſo refined, and your 'knowledge ſo much increaſed, that you 'would but ill reliſh the ruſtick ſolitude 'of your former cottage; I ſhall there-'fore remit to you four hundred pounds 'a year, which will enable you to live 'where you now are; and, as ſoon as 'my mind acquires a little eaſe, I will 'ſo far extend a regard, (which, alas, 'Ophelia! I fear I ſhall always pre-'ſerve) as to write you ſome neceſſary 'advice concerning your future conduct: 'for, whatever I am, I muſt wiſh you 'happy; and that thoſe who poſſeſs 'more of your affections may adore you 'as I have done. I am carrying an af-'flicted heart into the country, unable 'to ſtay in town after having reſolved 'never to ſee you more. Your huma-'nity would make you pity, though you 'cannot love me, if you knew with 'what agonizing pain I ſay—Farewel 'for ever!'

A ſlender judgment of what I muſt have felt at the peruſal of this letter, will ſerve to convince you that I was the greateſt object of pity. Regardleſs of the preſence of my ſervants, I could not forbear exclaiming—'Was it not enough 'to forſake me, but muſt he add re-'proaches to his cruelty! I practiſe de-'ceit! My ignorance of ſuch vile arts 'renders it impoſſible, even though my 'diſpoſition was not ſo open that I ſpeak 'my thoughts as freely as they riſe; 'and yet my countenance expreſſes them 'before my words can do it; and, were 'I to pollute my tongue with a falſe-'hood, would contradict it, and convict 'me of an untruth. But they are all 'innocent; what, then, ſhould hinder 'me from revealing them? And yet 'this man accuſes me of what he muſt 'know is a ſtranger to my heart! Arts 'and concealments are for the inconſtant 'and injurious; for thoſe who can op-'preſs the innocent, and make the friend-'leſs

'leſs wretched by their cruelty. Good 'Heaven! do I deſerve this character? 'Would to God he could as juſtly de-'fend himſelf from it!'

As ſoon as my maid perceived me ſo far deprived of my ſenſes as to give ſuch free and unguarded vent to my diſtraction, ſhe ſent the footman who had brought the letter out of the room, and was the only perſon preſent during my exclamation; to which a ſhort pauſe ſucceeded; and then I ran out of the room, with an air ſo frantick as greatly terrified her. She purſued me; and, ſtopping me before I got out of the houſe, aſked what I deſigned to do. My purpoſe was ſo full in my thoughts, that I told her I was going to Lady Paleſtine's, to aſk her where Lord Dorcheſter was, what he meant by quarrelling with me, and in what I had offended.

She kept faſt hold of me, till ſhe convinced me I was in a very improper way to appear before ſo much company, as I muſt be ſenſible, if I reflected on the hour, was then at Lady Paleſtine's. But to pacify me, in ſome degree, ſhe went herſelf; and ſending a moſt preſſing meſſage to her ladyſhip, brought her out of company to ſpeak with her. All the anſwer ſhe brought me was, that Lady Paleſtine was ignorant of every circumſtance, except that Lord Dorcheſter was gone out of town. As ſoon as the diſtraction of my mind abated enough to give leave to attend to the effects it had upon me, I found myſelf extremely ill, and was ſoon unable to ſit up. My maid, truly alarmed at my condition, ſent for a phyſician, who declared me in a high fever, and ordered me to be kept in bed. But the pains that afflicted me could not draw my attention from my lord's behaviour. My firſt reſolution was to refuſe the income he offered: I would not give him room to think he had made me any recompence for the injuries he had done, or that it was in his power to pay me for what he had made me ſuffer; firſt by tearing me from all my ſoul could wiſh; and then by abandoning me in a ſtrange land, unfriended and unknown.

If my lord's inconſtancy had deprived me of my greateſt good, I determined my own ſpirit ſhould diſcharge me from the leſſer; if he thought me beneath his friendſhip, I thought myſelf above his charity: nor could his whole fortune have given me the joy I ſhould have received from one ſymptom of regard. I had money enough remaining to carry me back to my beloved aunt, who grew more dear to me from my lord's ill-treatment. From her tender and conſtant affection I hoped to find relief; in her goodneſs expected to receive conſolation for the faults of others; and, far from this bad town, to learn to forget it, and it's cruel inhabitants, whoſe minds are as variable as their climate.

Theſe hopes and reſolutions were the reſult of my thoughts while I remained ſenſible: but, as to cure a diſtemper by medicine which proceeds from anxiety of mind is a vain attempt, I grew at laſt ſo bad, that I was light-headed; to which I may attribute my recovery. Want of reflection did what reaſon could not effect; it quieted my mind, and my conſtitution received benefit from it: for as grief was the cauſe of my illneſs, the loſs of the ſenſe of my affliction left me to youth and natural ſtrength, and my fever abated. As ſoon as I recovered my ſenſes, I was apprized of my danger, and once more ſaw death without terror. My doctor aſſured me he had ſaved my life. I could not have thanked him with a tolerable grace, had I believed him; but my credulity fell ſhort of his aſſurances. I was convinced my diſtemper was beyond the reach of human art, and preſſed him to ceaſe attempting a cure that would afford him little ſatisfaction, and me none. I was ſorry his benevolent diſpoſition ſhould throw away on me the time which he dedicated to the relief of mankind. But when he was gone, my maid told me he would not part with a patient ſo eaſily, as his benefit was certain, though mine was doubtful, and came in a pleaſing ſhape; for he received current gold in exchange for his advice, and declared war to the patient's palate in return for that reward; which, taken in the greateſt quantities, was in no danger of creating a nauſea.

When I found my doctor mercenary, inſtead of charitable, I felt leſs veneration for him: but no longer wondered money was held in ſo high eſteem, ſince people thought they could purchaſe health with it. Could I have flattered myſelf that would have brought me eaſe of mind, I ſhould have been very rapacious; but 'eſteem and love were never to be 'ſold;' and thoſe were the things wanting to my peace.

My

My illneſs deferred the execution of my intended departure from London; but the reſolution continued.

All my acquaintance ſent daily enquiries after my health: Sir Charles Liſdale never called leſs than twice a day. The firſt perſon I ſaw was Lady Paleſtine, with whom I hoped to indulge myſelf with talking of my diſtreſs; but my ſpirits were ſo weak, that when ſhe came, many paſt circumſtances crouded to my remembrance, and I was choaked with tears. She ſtaid ſome time in expectation of my growing more able to converſe, ſeeming deſirous to talk with me on the ſubject moſt at my heart; but finding no amendment, was afraid her preſence, by agitating me ſo greatly, might do me harm; and therefore left me, with a deſire that I would let her know when I was more able to ſee her.

Not underſtanding the paſſion of jealouſy, I did not perceive any ſigns of remaining love in Lord Dorcheſter, or ſome flattering hopes might have been my conſolation: I ſhould then have ſeen, that the man who wrote that letter was not indifferent; of which I was now ſo well perſuaded, that I never conſidered there was a poſſibility of his being otherwiſe. What ſerved to convince me the more entirely of it, was his never having yet made any enquiry after me, though I had been ſo long and ſo dangerouſly ill. Seeing every thing in the worſt light, I did not conſider that he might not know it. The continual meſſages I received from many gentlemen, with the more particular enquiries of Sir Charles Liſdale, and Lord Larborough, a young nobleman, who always followed me about like a ſhadow, (a conſtant, rather than an agreeable, attendant, for he ſeldom ſpoke to me) made Lord Dorcheſter's neglect appear the greater.

At firſt I imagined my lord's affection for me never real, or it could not ſo ſoon be entirely extinguiſhed; but I now began to think even humanity was dead in him. Good-nature would have ſuggeſted to him, but friendſhip would have forced him, to adminiſter ſome conſolation to the misfortunes of one whom he had introduced to miſery, though ſhe ſeemed to have been placed by Fortune out of the reach of his inhumanity. It never once occurred to me, that he did not imagine I wanted any conſolation; and that from this error aroſe all my grief and his. My afflictions ſeemed near an end: though my fever was gone, yet I did not recover; I was pale and emaciated, had neither ſtrength to move, nor ſpirits to ſpeak, equally weak both in mind and body; and had not a ray of hope at laſt ſhone upon me, I believe my exiſtence had not been of long duration.

CHAP. XXIV.

AS I was deſirous of converſing with Lady Paleſtine, I ſent to her as ſoon as I thought I had brought myſelf to ſee her with leſs diſcompoſure. Upon turning the diſcourſe to Lord Dorcheſter's ſudden departure from London, I frankly ſpoke the ſentiments of my heart, and expreſſed my grief, as well as aſtoniſhment, at ſo immediate an alteration. She told me, ſhe was well perſuaded that jealouſy of Sir Charles Liſdale was the occaſion of it: and ſhe herſelf ſeemed to have ſome ſuſpicion of my giving the baronet the preference. As I had always appeared without diſguiſe to my lord, it was moſt incredible to me that he could entertain any ſuch opinion; and my earneſtneſs, as well as my late diſorder, when ſhe learned it was the conſequence of Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour, were pretty ſufficient proofs to her ladyſhip that ſhe had been under a miſtake. However, had they not been convincing, all poſſibility of doubt was removed before ſhe left me. As we were ſitting, a meſſage was brought up to me from Mrs. Belfaſt, a lady with whom I had become acquainted at Lady Paleſtine's, importing, that ſhe was at the door to enquire after my health; and, if I was well enough to admit her, would be extremely glad to wait on me. Not being fit to ſee company, I had hitherto declined all viſits; but as Lady Paleſtine's coach was at the door, I thought I could not, without a manifeſt affront, refuſe ſeeing Mrs. Belfaſt.

The lady was extremely intimate with Sir Charles Liſdale; and had no ſooner done expreſſing her concern at my looking ſo ill, than ſhe began to tell me how very ſenſibly Sir Charles had been afflicted; and that he had engaged her to beg my permiſſion for his waiting on me, to congratulate me on my recovery; and to receive his cure from ſeeing mine, till when he could enjoy no health.

Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour had diſguſted me with the ſex; and, ſince Lady Paleſtine had given me reaſon to think my lord was jealous of Sir Charles, I was more particularly averſe to ſeeing him. With more ſincerity and poſitiveneſs than was conſiſtent with good-breeding, I immediately refuſed to receive his viſit.

But Mrs. Belfaſt was too zealous an advocate to be rebuffed by one denial; and, being extremely intimate with Lady Paleſtine, ſhe ſaid, ſhe thought her preſence need not prevent her from performing another part of her commiſſion, if I refuſed the firſt. She then made a long panegyrick on Sir Charles; expatiated on the exceſs of his love for me, of his uneaſineſs at being debarred my converſation; extolled his good qualities, his underſtanding and temper, and various merits, which were unneceſſarily enumerated to me, who knew him; and ended with ſaying, that, if I would not give him the liberty of telling me how much he loved me, ſhe was commanded to do it for him; and to let me know, that his higheſt ambition was to be united to me for life. If I would conſent to marry him, my happineſs ſhould be his ſole ſtudy; that he and his fortune would always be at my diſpoſal; and he ſhould think himſelf under the higheſt obligation for the felicity he muſt enjoy in an union with me; that his eſtate was very conſiderable; that I ſhould myſelf direct the ſettlements, for he could never eſteem his whole fortune in any degree equal to my merits.

This propoſal ſtartled me; it ſhewed more true affection than all Lord Dorcheſter's actions. To bind himſelf for life, to give me the command of his fortune, was a ſtrong proof of his good opinion. My own reflections engaged me for a few minutes; and thoſe few ſerved to ſhew me, that though I always eſteemed Sir Charles, was delighted with his converſation, and now felt myſelf ſincerely grateful, yet I could not think of marrying him. This I told Mrs. Belfaſt in the plaineſt terms; acknowledging, at the ſame time, my real regard for him, and my gratitude for ſo generous a proof of his affection.

She endeavoured to prevail upon me to give a more favourable anſwer; and ſo earneſtly preſſed for my conſent, that ſhe convinced me ſhe was a warm friend, and no bad advocate. But at laſt, aſſured of my inflexibility, ſhe went away; telling me that ſhe ſaw to what Sir Charles owed the misfortune of a refuſal: had not my affections been engaged, I muſt have accepted his offers; but he had feared to find Lord Dorcheſter an impediment to the completion of his wiſhes; and ſhe grieved that ſhe muſt be obliged to give him ſo ſtrong a proof of the reaſonableneſs of his apprehenſions.

When Mrs. Belfaſt was gone, Lady Paleſtine aſked me why I refuſed a propoſal ſo much to my advantage. I knew not well how to anſwer: my heart, not my reaſon, gave the denial; and it's emotions are not ſo eaſily deſcribed. All I had to ſay was, that I could not think of marrying him. I liked his company extremely, was convinced of his love, and grateful for it; that marriage muſt give him ſuch a title to my affection as even Lord Dorcheſter could not diſapprove, and could not imagine interfered with my friendſhip for him, the only ſort of attachment he required; for he had never given me ſo ſtrong a proof of his good opinion as to think of me in the capacity of a wife.

Lady Paleſtine aſked if I was then determined to marry no man. I replied, indeed, ſuch was my reſolution. I was ſenſible, from this ſmall trial, that I could not bear to look on any man in the light of a huſband except Lord Dorcheſter; and I wiſhed only to live with him as a friend: but thoſe bleſſed days were over; and I had now no other deſign than to return, as ſoon as my ſtrength would permit me, to my ſolitude, and dedicate the remainder of my life to recompenſe my aunt for what I had involuntarily occaſioned her to ſuffer.

I ſaw Lady Paleſtine liſten to me with ſome contempt. When I had done ſpeaking, ſhe, with a ſneer, intermixed the words *girliſh paſſions*, *fooliſh conſtancy*, *romantick notions*, *imaginary delicacy*, with her anſwer; but I could have forgiven her a greater affront for the conſolation ſhe had brought me, by attributing Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour to jealouſy: though it ſeemed to me ſcarcely poſſible, yet my deſpair ſeized this glimmering of hope. I once more opened his letter; it correſponded with what ſhe had ſaid: and I now fancied ſome ſentences in it expreſſed a remaining tenderneſs. But, if this was the caſe, I thought it ſtrange that he did not enquire into the ſtate of my heart, and not build a belief on circumſtances,

cumſtances, when he might have had my word for information. It never occurred to me, that my teſtimony muſt appear fallible to a man who had been uſed to ſee ſo much falſhood; and that

'——Trifles, light as air,
'Are to the jealous confirmations ſtrong,
'As proofs of Holy Writ.'

Three days paſſed in reaſoning on a poſſibility, which was the foundation of all my comfort; till, at laſt, I began to ſay with Solomon, that 'hope deferred, 'maketh the heart ſick.' My hopes were too ſlightly raiſed to ſupport any degree of ſpirits for ſo long a time; they grew faint, and would ſoon have vaniſhed quite, and left me again a prey to deſpair, had they not been driven away by certainty. In the afternoon a letter was brought me from Lord Dorcheſter: I imagined it contained the inſtructions he propoſed me, yet opened it with a melancholy ſatisfaction, as his hand would endear the contents, let them be otherwiſe diſagreeable. But joy broke in at once upon my mind, at ſeeing the moſt affectionate addreſs, followed by words more tender. In the humbleſt manner, he begged leave to wait on me, to aſk a pardon from me, which he could never give to himſelf, for a behaviour ſo inexcuſable, founded on an injurious ſuſpicion, too raſhly conceived, and reſented. He expreſſed ſo lively a grief for the cruel effects of it, that, had I had ſpirits to have retained anger, I muſt have been pacified. He condemned himſelf in ſuch bitterneſs of ſoul, that I could ſcarcely forbear reſenting the injury he did the friend of my heart, as I then again eſteemed him, and was ready to think it the only fault he had committed.

This letter found me in ſo weak a condition, that I had not till then been able to get down ſtairs without aſſiſtance; but ſuch a cordial is joy, that I ran down to the ſervant to enquire where his lord was, who informing me that he was waiting impatiently at his houſe in town for my anſwer, I told him I would not detain him till I could write; but deſired he would acquaint his lord, that I wiſhed to ſee him as ſoon as poſſible.

The ſervant was not long in carrying his meſſage, nor his maſter in obeying it; few minutes paſſed before the flutter of expectation was put an end to by my lord's arrival. He entered the room with a confuſion that deprived him of utterance; and, taking my hand with a diffidence and melancholy that hurt me, preſſed it to his lips. My ſpirits, overcome with the agitation they had been in, failed me; and I began to weep more like a mourner than one in the exceſs of joy. My lord accompanied my tears with ſome of his, which ſeemed greatly to relieve him, and reſtore him to his ſpeech. 'I cannot, my Ophelia,' ſaid he, 'preſume to aſk your pity: I am oppreſſed 'with the conſciouſneſs of rather deſerving your hatred; but I am ſure, if you 'knew what I have ſuffered, and ſtill 'ſuffer, your generous and gentle nature 'would look on me, however blameable, 'yet as an object worthy your compaſſion, ſince my puniſhment has been 'adequate to my greateſt offence; and, if 'it could be expiated, muſt be ſufficient 'to waſh it away. I thought it impoſſible 'to be a greater wretch than I was while 'I imagined Sir Charles Liſdale poſſeſſed 'your heart; but ſince I learnt from 'Lady Paleſtine the injuſtice I have done 'you, and how grievouſly you have ſuffered by it, I have been ten thouſand 'times more miſerable: the paleneſs of 'your cheeks, and the languor in your 'eyes, are reproaches that rend my heart. 'To ſee you thus, is worſe than being 'torn from you. O my Ophelia! can 'you ever forgive me?'

My lord, indeed, appeared ſo very wretched, that I could not add to his ſelf-reproaches; but, on the contrary, endeavoured to extenuate his fault. I aſſured him, that if his neglect had made me ſick, his kindneſs would be my cure; that it had almoſt made me well already; and that the pleaſure I now felt compenſated all paſt pains, which would only ſerve henceforward to heighten all my happineſs by compariſon: but all I could ſay ſeemed to heighten his grief, inſtead of alleviating it. He begged I would be leſs generous, and ſaid my goodneſs added to his miſery, in ſhewing him ſtill more criminal in wronging, in afflicting an angel. I found by converſing with him, that he had deſired Lady Paleſtine to obſerve my behaviour, and diſcover my ſentiments; that ſhe had written him word of what paſſed in her viſit to me, which affected him ſo much, that he ſet out that inſtant, and would not ſuffer the darkeſt, moſt ſtormy night in the whole winter, to ſtop him in his journey; ſo impatient was he to ſee me. The moment

he arrived, he went to Lady Paleſtine, to learn every circumſtance, more particularly than he could by her letter, which both ſatisfied, and touched him more ſenſibly.

He could not venture to ſee one whom he had ſo much injured, as he was pleaſed to think he had done me, without firſt aſking permiſſion; but not having patience to ſtay for his ſervant's return with my anſwer, he met him half way, which occaſioned his being with me ſo immediately.

CHAP. XXV.

I Now found that nothing was ſo beneficial to the conſtitution as eaſe of mind. A few days paſſed in happineſs made a greater progreſs in my recovery than all the medicines which the phyſician had yet preſcribed me. As grief was the cauſe of my ſickneſs, it was but natural that health ſhould be the conſequence of my felicity.

I firſt now learnt to play the hypocrite. My lord ſeemed ſo tenderly anxious for my health, and reproached himſelf ſo much for every pain I felt, that when I was moſt ill, I durſt not indulge myſelf in the peeviſh ſatisfaction of complaining; perceiving that he ſuffered more by my ſickneſs than I did; for, though I inſtantly forgave him, he could not forgive himſelf. Had it not been for the conſideration, that what has once been may be again, and the fear of my lord's relapſing at any time into the ſame ſort of whim, I ſhould have been happier than ever; for he was now never an hour in the day abſent. Even ſickneſs had it's pleaſure; his care and watchful attendance turned pain into delight. I took advantage of my diſorder to excuſe my keeping at home, that I might not loſe my lord's company, for thoſe who I began to ſee acted upon cuſtom, ſoliciting what they did not deſire, and begging for what they would not chuſe to have granted. I had learnt, that to be impertinent was civil, and thoroughly troubleſome was being perfectly well-bred. I found, that the aim of the complaiſant was not ſo much to pleaſe, as to appear pleaſed, truſting to vanity for rendering it mutual. In conſequence of theſe cuſtoms, I was too ſoon obliged to mortify myſelf, and plague others, to avoid affronting them, though I deferred as long as my health would leave me the ſhadow of an excuſe.

The firſt day I went to Lady Paleſtine's, I met Sir Charles Liſdale there, who ſeemed to have loſt all vivacity, which had rendered him ſo agreeable. He approached me with a very dejected air, and uſed all poſſible entreaties to perſuade me to admit a viſit from him. When they failed, he expatiated on his paſſion with an elegance and appearance of ſincerity that affected me, though not with love. The very thoughts of marrying him created a kind of diſlike in me, which I did not feel before; but yet he ſeemed ſo ſeriouſly touched in all he ſaid, that I was ſorry to add to his uneaſineſs. Endeavouring to comfort him, I aſſured him of my regard and gratitude, expreſſing great pleaſure in the expectation of ſeeing him often at Lady Paleſtine's, as uſual: but he told me, that if I was abſolute in my determination, he muſt ſeek for eaſe in abſence; for that he ſhould be wretched with ſo poor a return, unleſs my cruelty could conquer his paſſion. I could not help thinking the whole ſex diſtracted. To forſwear any farther acquaintance with me, if he could not have my company at all times, and fixed for life, appeared to me as unreaſonable as if a man was to kill himſelf becauſe he did not poſſeſs every thing he wiſhed in this world; refuſing to enjoy the ſolid comforts of life, if ſome trifling benefit was denied him. I was ſorry Sir Charles was determined to avoid me: I thereby loſt the converſation of a man I greatly liked and eſteemed; and Lord Dorcheſter now appeared ſo eaſy about him, that I had no reaſon to fear any inconveniences ſhould ariſe from our acquaintance. My lord endeavoured to account for his jealouſy from the general inconſtancy of both ſexes; but I could not think this a ſufficient reaſon for it, as inconſtancy towards him could not be ſo well juſtified, as in many caſes; for, by what I could learn, the general practice of deceit makes people appear ſo much better at firſt, than on a long acquaintance they prove to be, that to continue to love them, rather than ceaſe to do ſo, ſhould be termed inconſtancy. When the merit diſappears, the object of a reaſonable affection is no longer the ſame; and love, like all other ſtructures, ſhould fall when the foundation ſinks. Our love ſhould follow our eſteem; and conſequently no one can have a right to the one after he has forfeited

forfeited his title to the other. When the deceit appears, by the maſk's falling off the mind, the man can have no better demand upon our hearts than his picture has; indeed, ſcarcely ſo much, as the painted canvas is moſt innocent; but the daubed hypocrite moſt criminal. Lord Dorcheſter's virtues ſeemed to me too real and permanent, to reduce a woman to change, and therefore I could not allow he had a good excuſe for his ſuſpicions; and I was fully determined to avoid exciting any for the future, by watching my behaviour more narrowly, and not leaving my vivacity under the command of my innocence, ſince that could not defend it from giving offence. Sir Charles could no longer be an object of uneaſineſs; for after meeting him once more at Lady Paleſtine's, when he took a moſt affectionate farewel, which I returned with all the ſincerity of my warmeſt good wiſhes, he left London, giving out that he was going to make the tour of Europe. He politely ſaid, in hopes, by the variety of objects, and diſſipation, to baniſh me from his mind. I could not think but this arduous affair might have been contrived with leſs trouble; and have been more convinced of it, ſince experience has ſhewn me, that the memory is not one of thoſe hard compoſitions out of which impreſſions are ſo very difficult to eraſe. I have ſeen a woman waſh her lover from her remembrance in leſs time than ſhe could get a ſpot of ink out of her ruffle.

Could I have brought myſelf to follow the cuſtom of being denied, I ſhould have been tempted to abate my civility to my acquaintance. But the practice of falſehood, however trifling the circumſtance, appeared to me a thing of conſequence. It teaches people to diſregard truth; and we cannot expect thoſe whom we inſtruct to lye for our convenience ſhould forbear it when it may turn to their own advantage: it is corrupting the minds of perſons who, being in our power, ought to be the objects of our care, whoſe principles we ſhould watch over, and improve by precept and example. Your ladyſhip has obſerved, that my opinion and practice are ſtill the ſame in this particular, though acknowledging the inconveniences ariſing from it: but greater evils cannot diſpenſe with our adherence to truth. The temptation was certainly never ſtronger than at the time of which I am ſpeaking; when Lord Dorcheſter's conſtant converſation was a neceſſary reward for what I had lately ſuffered; and yet I had leſs liberty of enjoying it at home than abroad, as I was obliged to direct all my converſation to my viſitors.

CHAP. XXVI.

AMONG other places where I went after the recovery of my happineſs and my health, was the maſquerade. The company, beſide Lady Paleſtine, Lord Dorcheſter, and Lord Larborough, who was become very intimate with my lord, were, Lady Cambridge, Lady Rocheſter, and Miſs Baden, of whom I ſhall give your ladyſhip ſome little account before I proceed with them to the Haymarket. Lady Cambridge claims the firſt place; and far be it from me to rob her of a precedency ſhe would not have relinquiſhed, no not in paſſing over a dunghill, for her whole eſtate. For the honour of having been the firſt woman, I believe ſhe would ſoon have been contented to have reſigned her exiſtence, and to have lain as long in the grave as our mother Eve has. With all this, ſhe was courteous to exceſs; for, being perſuaded that a word from her was a great honour to thoſe who received it, and being of a benevolent diſpoſition, ſhe generouſly beſtowed that ineſtimable favour on all ſhe met. Humility was the virtue on which ſhe particularly piqued herſelf; and, to make it known to others, ſhe lived in a perfect convulſion of civility, and had not a limb or feature that was not as much overſtrained by the violence of her endeavours as her complaiſance. In the height of theſe agitations, one could as little know her perſon as her mind, by the courteſy ſhe profeſſed. No one ſo bitterly inveighed againſt proud perſons, telling you that pride was her deteſtation. Convinced her approbation ſtamped a value on every thing, ſhe would praiſe every part of your dreſs, in order to give a dignity to trifles. I never ſaw a woman who ſo truly laboured in her calling; for affability was her profeſſion. If it was in the power of a perſon one did not eſteem to humble one, the impetuoſity of her civility would have done it; for her complaiſance was an inſult, and her fawning inſolence. They appeared only to her inferiors; to her equals in birth, ſhe was ſtately and imperious. Like the generous lion, ſhe would condeſcend to engage

engage with an inſignificant plebeian, but would enter the combat with a true heroick ſpirit if her antagoniſt was of ſuch noble blood as deſerved her notice, and defend her glorious prerogative of precedency at the expence of every rule of good-breeding. Lady Rocheſter was a perſon of ſublimer notions, than to diſpute the precedency I have given to Lady Cambridge. She was in perſon tall and thin, formal in her manner, and ſolemn in her countenance. Her chief employ was reading, and the great purpoſe of it to appear wiſe, not to be ſo. She acquired a ſmattering in many ſtudies; and, having amaſſed a great number of technical terms, ſhe applied them to all ſubjects, whether proper or improper; and, by *happy* chance, they were generally miſplaced. If a ribband was the topick of diſcourſe, ſhe delivered her ſentiments in mathematical phraſes; if ſhe ordered any of her family affairs, which indeed was but ſeldom (for her genius ſoared above ſuch vulgar things) ſhe would borrow her expreſſions from metaphyſicks, and talk of the *entity* of a piece of beef, the *non-exiſtence* of a pigeon-pye, and the *heterogeneous* particles in Salmigondi; or, changing ſcience, but ſtill remaining ſcientifick, would expatiate on the *infinitiſſimals* in minced meat. To deſcribe an aſſembly, ſhe would call aſtronomy to her aſſiſtance, and algebra muſt furniſh it's quota of words to enable her to inform you of the numbers that were at it. No perſon could be mentioned without reminding her of ſome one in antiquity. If a gentleman appeared inattentive, he was as abſent as *Archimedes* when *Syracuſe* was taken: if a perſon expreſſed concern at the great prevalence of vice, he was like *Heraclitus*, weeping for follies he could not cure; and therefore ſhe adviſed him to inhabit a tub, like *Diogenes*, unleſs he would ceaſe to expect perfection in finite beings, endowed with free-will, and void of all preſcience; for that all ages had been corrupt, and every nation vicious, except ſome few; which ſhe would not omit to mention, any more than to enumerate the different vices of all kingdoms, beginning with Cain's envy and cruelty; and ſometimes, ſcarcely ſparing the frailty of our firſt parents. If the perſon whom ſhe addreſſed, as would often be the caſe, happened to laugh at the inundation of wiſdom ſhe beſtowed upon him, ſhe would obſerve, that though *riſibility* was one of the moſt diſtinguiſhing *characteriſticks* of the human ſpecies; yet, as laughter aroſe from pride, it ought to be ſuppreſſed: but if he did not compoſe his countenance into proper gravity on this rebuke, ſhe would declare him as indocile as *Nero* to *Seneca's* inſtructions, and therefore leave him. If a man had an impediment in his ſpeech, he ſtammered like *Alcibiades*. A narrow paſſage was the Streights of *Thermopylæ*; and if any people ſtood at one end of it, ſhe never failed diſcovering a *Leonidas* amongſt them. If a lady whiſpered a piece of ſcandal, ſhe was more ſevere than the *Athenian* oſtraciſm, from which the juſt *Ariſtides* could not eſcape uncenſured. If ſhe was offended with a fop, ſhe declared him more effeminate than *Sardanapalus*, and more indolent than the moſt inactive of the *Merovigienne* race. A country ſquire came by chance into her company, once when I was preſent, and ſhe cried out, he was more ſavage than the *Huns*, *Goths*, or *Vandals*; and *Attila* or *Genſerick* were polite in compariſon of that barbarian. If a ball was mentioned, ſhe would declare her long deſire to ſee the *Salian* dance, and grieve for the degeneracy of mankind in not reviving the *Olympick* games. A war was particularly fortunate for her, as ſhe would, from the ſmalleſt ſkirmiſh, find an opportunity of talking of the battle of *Marathon*, of *Cannæ*, or ſome other equally remote from the preſent age; and of adviſing every general ſhe ſaw, to a new way of martialing his army; particularly recommending to him the imitation of the *Macedonian* phalanx. She affronted ſeven young ladies reſplendently dreſſed, who were ſtanding together, telling them, they reminded her of *Urſa Major*: the ſimile did not ſound well; and they all frowned moſt uncourteouſly; but could not diſcourage her from addreſſing a lady cloathed in ſilver tiſſue, on her ſhining like the *Galaxy*. Folly, as well as vice, ſometimes is productive of good to part of the ſociety. Thus her ladyſhip's pedantick vanity gave her a right to the praiſe given to Lewis; ſince it muſt be ſaid—

> 'That ſhe the living genius fed,
> 'And rais'd the ſcientifick head.'

For flattering herſelf with a notion of being a female *Mecænas*, as ſhe would often indirectly call herſelf, ſhe imitated his bounty, if ſhe could not rival his judgment;

judgment; and reconciled those two parts of man, the mind and body, which are apt to be so much at variance, that where one is greatly attended to, the other generally suffers severely by neglect.

Whether there is less variety in good than in evil, or that we are apt to be more concise in our panegyricks than our satires, I know not; but few words, though much affection, will fall to Miss Baden's share. Folly is extremely various; but good sense is uniform, and, from it's perfect consistency, is soon described. I had not then met with a woman whom I thought so agreeable as Miss Baden. She was several years older than myself, and seemed well acquainted with the world; was sensible, polite, modest, and gentle; her voice remarkably pleasing; and, though not handsome, had a great deal of sweetness in her countenance.

Miss Baden was a good deal disposed in my favour. So well inclined to each other, I believe we should then have become intimate, had not Lord Dorchester discouraged it, and as much as possible interrupted our acquaintance. As he had known her longer, I could not doubt but she had faults which had disgusted him, though I had not perceived them, and therefore avoided her to the utmost of my power. The reason of my lord's objecting to her will be obvious to your ladyship; to whom I need not say that he feared her discernment, and the frankness of her nature, which must together enable her to see the arts used to impose upon me, as well as the end designed by them, and induce her to discover the whole to one whom a woman of her sense and virtue must pity, for being too likely to become the prey of arts and vices she could not suspect, and therefore was the less qualified to baffle.

In this company I went to the masquerade, which had been so described to me, as to raise my curiosity very much; but in absurdity it exceeded what my expectation had formed of it. The motley fantastick crew seemed to me more like what the imagination represents to us in sleep, when the body is disordered, than any real objects that ever appear before our eyes; and I have often thought their causes bore some resemblance to each other. Dreams are generally the effects of excesses, or of feverish heats; masquerades are the produce of a strange excess of fancy and overheated imagination, set to work by a wild desire of amusement.

The variety of shocking forms terrified me, till use had a little familiarized them; and I found that this assembly, in the opinion of most people, received it's terrors, not from masking the faces, but unmasking the mind. When I learned that the English were such great enemies to sincerity that none dared practise it barefaced, I allow there was some excuse for thus defending themselves from the ill effects of so uncommon an indulgence of that virtue. I should imagine some relaxation from the painful exercises of dissimulation and flattery necessary, and might be productive of general good. But the divine countenance of Truth is so seldom seen here, that if by chance she does appear, she is often mistaken for Ill-nature. Nor can one wonder at the error; for she is, according to the fashionable phrases, 'One that nobody knows—One that one never 'meets any where:' and therefore, if she will intrude, it is not wonderful if she is so ill treated as to be forced immediately to withdraw. The impression she leaves behind only serves to make her avoided like a bugbear, and ridiculed without mercy; so generally rebuffed, that she can scarcely find shelter in a cottage; for she seldom meets with a very different reception, from the most sumptuous palaces down to the poorest hut: she may, indeed, perceive that the force of her charms can be properly known only on long acquaintance. There is a severity in her countenance which may please less, at first, than the alluring sweetness of falshood; but, in time, her's is seen to be an unfading beauty; and though she may sometimes appear severe, is never morose. The whole majesty in her mien pleases, while it awes beholders who have any taste for true loveliness; and the longer her votaries serve her, the more they are captivated with her charms: time increases their love, and familiarity raises their adoration; an effect not to be paralleled in any other case. From the little acquaintance people have with this divine goddess, they sometimes mistake one for her who bears a small resemblance to some of her features; but so greatly heightened and bloated, that, to a distinguishing eye, she is no more like her than a Saracen's head is like the Venus of Medicis, and her true names are Brutality

and

and Cenſoriouſneſs. This ape of her divinity, I believe, frequents maſquerades as much or more than ſhe does. Accuſtomed to exceſſes, people loſe the reliſh for the true medium, and make but one ſtep from flattery to abuſe.

Thoſe who have fawned and cringed in a drawing-room till after ten o'clock, will, before eleven, under the ſhelter of an antick dreſs and maſk, be laviſhly dealing out their impertinence and incivility in the Haymarket. Obſerving this to Lady Rocheſter, ſhe replied, that ſhe looked on a maſquerade as the *Engliſh Saturnalia*; and as people of faſhion here were more abject ſlaves to ceremonious forms than the *Roman* domeſticks were to their maſters, it was but reaſonable that they ſhould have their days of liberty to declare their diſguſt with impunity, and revile thoſe they diſapprove. I found her ladyſhip ſo prejudiced in favour of the *Saturnalia*, becauſe of it's antiquity, that ſhe made no diſtinction between freedom and licentiouſneſs.

I ſoon perceived that I ſhould acquire more knowledge of the true diſpoſitions of mankind at three of theſe aſſemblies than by living three months in the polite world; for it was the firſt time I ſaw people in their natural characters; the mind was now apparent, the face only hid: and as the company I was with were much uſed to theſe entertainments, they could ſee through the maſks, which would have concealed many of my acquaintance from my leſs diſcerning eyes; and by their aſſiſtance I perceived the forced prude indulging in coquetry; the affectedly grave giving a looſe to mirth and pleaſure; the fawning, pert, and impertinent; great ſtateſmen condeſcending to be trifling, and philoſophers to be fooliſh; all laying aſide thoſe parts which intereſt, the love of power, or of fame, induced them to act in publick.

Lady Cambridge was as new to this entertainment as myſelf, never having been at a maſquerade before; and I could ſee the great familiarity with which every one accoſted her, with as little diſtinction as they could the loweſt plebeian, greatly offended her pride, and ſhe could ſcarcely prevail on herſelf to conceal ſo much nobility under a maſk. That I might be ſure of the cauſe of the diſturbance I perceived in her, I obſerved, that this diverſion ſeemed an emblem of death; it laid all hearts open, and put an end to all diſſimulation and pretence; and if the reſurrection was not ſo quick, I ſhould be more on a par with the reſt of the world, ſince I was not one of the number who durſt not appear without an internal maſk, unleſs I had an external one to conceal me: that, like the grave too, it levelled all diſtinctions, and brought high and low on an equality. Upon thus touching the tender point, her ladyſhip anſwered, that indeed ſhe thought maſquerades could never long meet with encouragement from perſons of rank, unleſs they could find out a method of diſtinguiſhing their conditions. I propoſed a coronet on the maſk, as the eaſieſt method of fixing the ſtamp of rank and faſhion on thoſe who could claim it. She was charmed with the thought, and declared ſhe would endeavour to bring her friends into it; and, if it once became general, ſhe ſhould be a conſtant perſon at thoſe diverſions, ſince, in every reſpect but that levelling quality, ſhe liked them extremely.

A maſquerade by no means anſwered my expectations: the variety of characters which I was told were there perſonated, ſeemed to promiſe much entertainment; but, before half the evening was ſpent, I found that wit, the great requiſite to make them ſo, was a ſcarce commodity; and that after the wearer was once dreſſed, he thought as little of the character he had aſſumed, as he did of the propriety of it when he choſe the habit. Thus one ſees a Harlequin limping with difficulty acroſs the room; an old woman ſkipping and dancing more nimbly than any of the company; a French petit-maitre penſive or ſleepy; a fortune-teller dancing a minuet; a bear exerciſing the height of ſolemn politeneſs; a ſhepherdeſs bold and impudent; a nun coquetiſhly friſky; a Turk drinking wine; and a Spaniard eaſy, gay, and familiar.

Though novelty has great charms, yet I grew weary before the greateſt part of the company; the lateneſs of the hour contributed more than any thing to tire me. I could not reconcile myſelf to the cuſtom of the civilized part of the world of reverſing the order of nature; of ſleeping the beſt part of the day, neglecting the ſun in his brightneſs, and inventing artificial lights to illumine the night. It was ſtrange to me to find that people were never lively but when they ſhould be at reſt.

I was

I was inclined to ſuſpect them of a ſuperſtitious regard to midnight; eſpecially when I reflected that the only muſick which was on any ſettled eſtabliſhment, and the only lay-monitor, performed at that time, and in the darkeſt ſeaſon of the year; a time, to perſons who keep regular hours, the moſt unfit for muſick; ſince there will ſeldom be much harmony in the minds of people waked out of a ſleep which was beginning to refreſh them after the labours of the day, even though Cecilia herſelf was to be the muſician.

The Chriſtmas monitor is better imagined, as he firſt rouſes them with his bell; and thus prepares them, with no ſmall ſolemnity, to liſten to the moral ſentences which he has moſt ingeniouſly put into verſe. Not ſuch, indeed, as the Muſes inſpire, and entitle the author to the pure ſtreams of Helicon, ale being both his inſpirer and his reward; and, inſtead of flying on the back of Pegaſus, he creeps with a crutch. This inſtitution, I have often thought, might be of great uſe in a religion whoſe doctrine was deſigned to fright from ſin by well-wrought terrors, rather than to encourage virtue by hopes. The awful ſound of his bell, at an hour to which darkneſs and the ſtillneſs of night gives a ſolemnity, would greatly heighten the figures, and ſtrengthen the metaphors, in a diſcourſe formed to work on the fears of our timorous imaginations. Religious hobgoblins, as well as childiſh bugbears, are but little believed in ſunſhine. That great luminary diſpels ſuperſtition as well as all other clouds and vapours; it clears the underſtanding as well as the ſky; it nouriſhes only what is natural, baniſhing all fantaſtick forms, which are forced to fly before it, and take ſhelter under the ſhade of night, when the mind is more gloomy and leſs rational. Notwithſtanding my objections of turning the night into day, I was obliged, in a great meaſure, to conform to the general cuſtom; though never ſo far as to ſuffer it to deprive me of the enjoyment of the bleſſed ſun, whoſe preſence had more charms for me than the company of thoſe who deſpiſed it: ſo that my nights, not my days, were abridged by theſe late entertainments; and the next was obliged to make up to me for the encroachments on the night before, if requiſite, which it ſeldom was, as I had been accuſtomed to take little ſleep.

CHAP. XXVII.

IT was uſual with Lord Dorcheſter and myſelf to take a morning walk, whenever the weather would permit it, in the fields leading to Chelſea; which gave riſe to an adventure ſo intereſting, that I cannot forbear communicating it to your ladyſhip, though it is foreign to the hiſtory I have engaged to give you of myſelf.

For ſeveral days together we obſerved a man who with care avoided the publick path, though he walked in the ſame fields. Curioſity at laſt tempted us to go up to him. His ſickly and dejected aſpect excited our compaſſion. Lord Dorcheſter, whoſe humanity made him feel for the diſtreſſes of others, though of ſuch a nature as he could never have experienced, was greatly touched with the appearance of wretchedneſs ſo viſible in this man. He was ſitting down on the trunk of a tree. We ſeated ourſelves by him. He attempted to riſe; more from a deſire of flying ſociety, than from an humble intention of giving place to perſons who ſeemed more in Fortune's favour than himſelf; but my lord would not permit him to leave us. After aſking ſeveral queſtions about indifferent things, and with great difficulty leading him into diſcourſe, my lord told him, that he might appear impertinent in thus forcing himſelf into his acquaintance, but that compaſſion, and a deſire to aſſiſt him, was his motive: that he appeared unhappy; and, if it was not improper, we ſhould be infinitely obliged to him if he would inform us what was the occaſion of it.

The poor man ſhook his head, and declined complying with his requeſt, ſaying, nothing was leſs agreeable to hear, nor to relate, than a ſeries of diſtreſſes. That he made it a rule never to talk of his misfortunes; for if he met with bad, ill-natured people, they would diſlike him for being wretched, and avoid him as if miſery was infectious. On the contrary, to perſons of humanity he would not chuſe to give even the pain of compaſſion. And, indeed, ſo much did he act up to this declaration, that he could not be prevailed upon to give any account of himſelf. My lord, finding he was not likely to ſucceed by entreaties, endeavoured to draw him into the ſubject; and, taking the hint from his

cloaths, which were a tattered ſuit of regimentals, began to expatiate on all the hardſhips to which military men are liable. Among the reſt, he took notice of the unhappy ſtate of a diſbanded regiment. My lord no ſooner fell on this topick, than it was very viſible in the poor man's countenance that he had hit upon the cauſe of his diſtreſs. My lord perceiving this, dwelt on the ſubject, and imagined all the caſes in which it could be moſt cruel; ſuppoſed many of theſe men to have wives and children to maintain out of a half-pay which could ſcarcely afford ſupport to themſelves; deſcribed the continual ſolicitation to men in power; and the neglect and indignities which he ſaid poverty was apt to receive. He then talked of the anxious ſtate of a ſuitor's mind, elevated with hopes only to be ſunk the next moment in deſpair. The poor man could hold out no longer; tears ran down his face, and he begged of my lord to ſay no more, for he had touched the ſtring of his misfortunes; crying out, with a kind of agony—'I 'have too long ſuffered all, and more 'than you have deſcribed, and gone 'through the ſcenes your imagination 'has only drawn. Be grateful, Sir, to 'Providence, for never having afflicted 'you with ſuch misfortunes; for I per-'ceive it has not, or you could not have 'dwelt on circumſtances, of which the 'bare recollection, though the time of 'ſuffering was paſt, muſt cut you to the 'ſoul.' Wound up to this pitch, it was eaſy to draw him into a relation of misfortunes which had too entire a poſſeſſion of his thoughts to be any longer concealed; but it was ſome time before we could get him into a regular narration. The diſturbance of his mind made him repeat a confuſed ſet of facts, mixed with ſuch pathetick exclamations, as drew tears from my eyes. However, at laſt, my lord compoſed his ſpirits ſo far, that he began thus.

'My name, Sir, is Traverſe. I was 'put into the army as ſoon as I was able 'to carry a pair of colours, which my 'father, who was a colonel, gave me; but 'dying ſoon after, and leaving me with 'nothing for my ſupport but the profits 'of my poſt, and the gratitude of his 'friends, among whom he had ſpent his 'fortune, it was not long before I expe-'rienced the diſagreeable parts of my 'profeſſion. My father's friends careſſed 'me indeed, and courted me into their 'company, which was attended with ex-'pences very inconvenient to me. I durſt 'not however wholly neglect them, as I 'hoped a return from their friendſhip, the 'frail dependence of people of my profeſ-'ſion, where intereſt is the ſovereign diſ-'poſer of every thing. But the firſt op-'portunity I had of trying theſe friends 'ſhewed me, that if hope was a pleaſure, 'it was one I was likely long to enjoy. 'Every vacancy in our regiment raiſed 'it, and I got no preferment to gratify it. 'Somebody or other was conſtantly put 'over my head, though they ſometimes 'could ſcarcely perform the eaſy exerciſes 'practiſed among us. My patrons 'aſſured me they did all they could; 'but ſome great power fruſtrated their 'endeavours. However, they fed me 'with promiſes of procuring me the next 'lieutenancy. For ſome years, I believe 'their intentions correſponded with their 'words; but at laſt, I found the higheſt 'favours I ſhould ever receive from them 'was being drawn into their follies and 'expences, little ſuitable to my inclina-'tions or income; being treated with the 'little ceremony of a dependent, and 'obliged to pleaſe their convenience and 'pride, which led them to like having gen-'tlemen in their train of followers. Many 'would ſhew me as a young man whom 'they had taken under their protection, 'and whoſe fortune they intended to 'puſh, having a great regard for my fa-'ther; and never failed inſinuating that 'they conferred continual obligations 'upon me. This greatly mortified my 'pride; as I was conſcious of receiving 'none from them, unleſs they eſteemed 'diſagreeable converſation as ſuch. Find-'ing I was not likely to be raiſed by their 'intereſt, and that, notwithſtanding I 'had been in ſeveral engagements, and 'received particular encomiums from 'my officers, yet ſtill I was paſſed by 'in every preferment, as much as if it 'had been impoſſible for me to change 'my poſt; I at laſt began to neglect 'them; and, in deſpair, reſolved to think 'no more of it, but to try whether time 'would be a better friend. Fortunately 'for me, we had a new colonel ſoon after 'this; who, underſtanding how long I 'had been in the regiment, and having 'enquired into my character, and the 'reaſon of my remaining ſo long an 'enſign, told me I ſhould ſee that merit 'had greater intereſt with him than the 'recommendations of people in power;

'and

'and accordingly gave me the first vacant 'lieutenancy. But he dying in a short 'time, I had no opportunity of experi- 'encing his farther goodness, which, I 'am persuaded, would have led him to 'promote me in due order. However, 'I was to owe the obligation to a fairer 'hand. Some time after my colonel's 'death, I renewed my acquaintance with 'a young lady, which had been for ma- 'ny years interrupted. During our 'childhood we had been almost conti- 'nually together; but were separated by 'an employment which called her fa- 'ther into a foreign country, from 'whence he was but just returned. I 'had not long visited at his house, be- 'fore I found a new kind of uneasiness 'which made me insensible to every 'thing that did not concern my great 'wish, the longing I had to make my 'former play-fellow the companion of 'my soul. The recollections of our 'childish sports, and all the passages of 'our infant years, created an intimacy 'between us almost as soon as we met. 'Though she was handsome, beauty was 'her least charm. Her understanding 'was excellent; though years and ex- 'perience could not be said to have im- 'proved it. Her heart was as free from 'blemish, as it was filled with virtues. 'Then the numberless attractions in eve- 'ry look and motion were so far beyond 'description, that I will be silent, though 'I could dwell on them for ever. I 'flattered myself with a belief of a 'friendly return of affection from this 'angel: but this was not sufficient; I 'ardently longed that she should con- 'ceive more tender sentiments, though 'the low state of my fortune would not 'permit me to endeavour to inspire 'them; as I considered it was the means 'of making her the companion of my 'despair, of which alone I wished to act 'the miser, and to communicate no part 'to her. Accident, however, betrayed 'the love I feared to reveal, and her be- 'haviour upon the occasion served to 'bind my fetters faster. Her generosity 'charmed me to excess; and we soon 'enjoyed the enchanting pleasure arising 'from profession of mutual love, with all 'the warmth and delicacy that could be 'felt or expressed by people filled with 'a passionate tenderness for each other, 'and blessed with frequent interviews. 'We were so happy, we even forgot 'there was a possibility of being hap- 'pier; but the evil star that presided at 'my birth would not leave me long 'in this situation. The father of my 'Caroline, for that was my angel's 'name, died; and having seen the mu- 'tual affection between me and his 'daughter, and the disadvantages which 'would arise to her from an union be- 'tween us, left her a good fortune, but 'on condition she should not marry me. 'Notwithstanding this cruel usage, she '(miracle of goodness!) grieved for a 'father who did not deserve it from her, 'and I was sufficiently employed in en- 'deavouring to comfort her, though I 'was little able to bear a circumstance 'which I thought must deprive me of all 'my hopes; for I could not think of 'bringing her into a state where her sup- 'port must end with my life, which had 'more than the common chances of 'mortality against it. But her gene- 'rosity disregarded these dangers. She 'had a sum of money, the legacy of an 'old aunt, sufficient to buy an exchange 'of a company for me. She pressed me 'to lay it out in this manner; but I was 'determined against making that use of 'it. It would indeed have made our 'income more tolerable; but, in case of 'my death, she must have been left en- 'tirely destitute. After finding that her 'generosity resisted all I could say to 'deter her from sharing the fortune of 'such a wretch as myself, (perhaps ar- 'guments so contrary to the tender sen- 'timents of my heart were not enforced 'in a persuasive manner) I told her, 'that if she would venture to marry me, 'and to share my poor commission, I 'should be the happiest man on earth; 'and would place her money in such a 'manner, that after my death it might 'be some little dependence for her; but 'that I absolutely would neither lay it 'out, nor receive any thing from it while 'I lived. She seemed to consent; and 'we agreed to relinquish the fortune her 'father had charged with such heavy 'conditions, and despise any treasure 'when put in competition with the pos- 'session of each other. Various acci- 'dents, however, deferred for some time 'the execution of our purpose; most of 'these delays, indeed, proceeded from 'her; but my confidence in her truth 'and love was such, that I could object 'to nothing she proposed, nor harbour 'any suspicion of a coldness in her heart. 'The liberty of spending almost all my

'time with her conſtituted a ſtate of 'bliſs, when ſhe gave it ſome interruption one day by delivering to me a captain's commiſſion, in the procuring of 'which ſhe had laid out all her little fortune. While a friend, but an injudicious one, had been tranſacting this affair, ſhe had on ſpecious pretences deferred our marriage, to avoid my having the power of preventing her from concluding it. It was ſurprizing how well ſhe had concealed the knowledge of it from me. I have ſeldom been more ſenſibly hurt, than at this diſcovery of what ſhe had done. She accompanied it with ſaying, that ſhe could not believe one who was ſo entirely mine, whoſe life and every thought and action depended ſo much on me, could ever remain in the world after I had left it; and therefore ſhe had taken care that I ſhould enjoy the little Fortune had given her; but if ſhe had had it in her power to make me the ſmalleſt reparation for the injuſtice of mercenary people, ſhe ſhould think herſelf happy. Though I was overcome with her generoſity, yet my concern got the better of my gratitude, and the firſt thing I ſaid was, that ſhe had entailed cowardice and conſtant miſery upon me; for I ſhould be ever wretched with the fear of what would become of her if I were to die. This ſort of converſations, when the heart is ſo much engaged in them as mine was, are never obliterated from the memory. But I find I ought often to check myſelf, for I am very tedious in my narration. My imagination was always too warm to ſuffer me to confine myſelf to a few principal facts, when the ſlighteſt circumſtances were of ſuch infinite pleaſure and importance to me. However, I will ſuppreſs what paſſed between us on the ſubject I have mentioned, though a thouſand things my Caroline ſaid croud to my remembrance, and fill me with rapture: but I will not allow utterance to one; and only tell you, in few words, that immediately after we were married.'

CHAP. XXVIII.

'THE joy,' continued the poor captain, 'which I received from the poſſeſſion of my dear Caroline, would have recompenſed me for much greater evils than thoſe I had experienced in life. Every day diſcovered ſome new virtue in her heart: time even improved her charms; and, however uncommon, what before marriage was only violent love and tender eſteem, grew in me almoſt to love and adoration. She was ſo good an œconomiſt, that we lived very neatly on our ſmall income; and ſhe appeared ſo entirely contented, that my ambition was loſt in exceſs of happineſs. I ſcarcely thought of farther preferment, nor felt the unjuſt preference given to much younger officers than myſelf. I ſaw boys, qualified neither by age nor experience for the loweſt poſts in the army, put over my head, and could not find diſturbance enough in my mind to produce one murmur. I conſidered Providence had laviſhed it's bleſſings on me, when it gave me my Caroline; and ſo conſiderable was my portion of happineſs, that I had no title to aſk for any thing more, but ought to leave to others the poor enjoyments of preferment. Nothing could tempt me out of her company, but an endeavour to get ſome little place for her, which might afford her a ſupport in caſe the thread of my earthly felicity ſhould be cut. For this I importuned my *friends*; for though I had but little confidence in them, yet this application ſeemed my only chance. My ſucceſs anſwered my faith; I got nothing done, after repeated trials, to remove this burden from my mind; which embittered my joy by ſo many painful reflections, that it almoſt made me a coward. Death appeared to me ſo encompaſſed with terrors, that I have often wondered how I could hazard the meeting of it, with tolerable compoſure, in the field, when, in the quiet of my own houſe, the leaſt diſorder filled me with inexpreſſible agonies, from the apprehenſions I had of it's increaſe. Though I have mentioned my happineſs as perfect, yet it was often interrupted by being obliged to attend the army abroad, and leave my wife to mourn my abſence: but then joyful returns ſucceeded, and recompenſed us for paſt pains. I often doubted whether I could be juſtified in hazarding the ſupport of an ineſtimable wife, and ſeveral fine children, in all the chances of war. It ſeemed reaſonable, that, in conſideration of them, I ought to have ſold out; but then,

'again,

'again, it was ungrateful to my king, to
'have received his pay ſo long, and leave
'his ſervice at the only time I could be
'uſeful. It was true, I had ſuffered a
'great deal of ill-treatment; but that
'was becauſe my obſcurity hid me from
'his majeſty's knowledge, and gave per-
'ſons of birth ſtill more obſcure, though
'higher in office, power to behave to-
'wards me as ſuch people will ever do
'to the unfriended. But I had ſtill ano-
'ther reaſon to keep and perform the
'duties of my commiſſion. Such an
'action would have branded me with
'the name of coward; and that I had
'not courage to bear: I could have
'given up my life for my family; but
'my reputation was of more importance
'to me, and without it I ſhould have
'been a diſgrace, inſtead of a comfort,
'to them. I ſhould have been unworthy
'of my Caroline: nor would ſhe, I am
'convinced, as much as ſhe was a prey
'to tender fears, have conſented that I
'ſhould have brought ſo great a misfor-
'tune on myſelf, in order to remove the
'chance of one from her. It is eaſy to
'imagine that peace gave us great joy;
'but we little foreſaw the conſequences.
'We had now nine children, the eldeſt
'not ſeventeen, the youngeſt under a year
'old. My health was much impaired
'by the campaigns abroad; but I doubt-
'ed not that I ſhould recover it, by the
'quiet and happy enjoyment of the com-
'pany of my wife and children. Nor was
'I miſtaken: by their kind care and at-
'tendance I was grown much better,
'when I heard the fatal news of the re-
'duction of our regiment. I was greatly
'ſhocked at this unexpected blow. By
'this means, our income was dwindled
'to ſo little, that it was inſufficient for
'the ſupport of ſo large a number. None
'of our children were large enough to
'contribute much to the general ſtock
'by their moſt induſtrious endeavours.
'I was too feeble in body, and too weak
'in mind, to give any aſſiſtance. The
'moſt extreme poverty, had it afflicted
'none but myſelf, would have rather
'ſerved as a ſpur than a depreſſion to
'my ſpirits: but when I reflected on the
'difficulties into which I had brought
'my wife, it overwhelmed me with grief;
'nor could it be cured by the patience
'and chearfulneſs with which ſhe bore
'this misfortune. Her behaviour, by
'ſhewing her merit ſtill more conſpicu-
'ouſly, only heightened my regret that
'ſuch virtue ſhould ſuffer. As fit to
'ſtruggle with bad fortune as to grace
'good, ſhe ſoon, by various kinds of
'work, found the means of increaſing our
'income; though the neceſſary care of
'ſo large a family would not ſuffer her
'to gain enough to enable us to con-
'tinue our ſons at ſchool, which was a
'great mortification, as we had always
'been deſirous of giving them good edu-
'cation, even though we ſhould ſtraiten
'ourſelves for that purpoſe, when our
'income was the moſt plentiful. All
'the ſervice my health could permit me
'to be of, was to turn ſchoolmaſter to
'my children, that they might ſuffer as
'little as poſſible from our poverty.
'Thus, by my Caroline's ingenuity and
'induſtry, we were ſupported: nor was
'I ever, for a moment, able to perceive,
'that ſhe either repined or grieved at
'being obliged to give this aſſiſtance;
'on the contrary, ſhe appeared to take
'greater pleaſure in it than in any amuſe-
'ments ſhe had ever enjoyed. But, as if
'Providence had ſome wiſe and good
'purpoſe in afflicting us, which by this
'means was fruſtrated, ſhe one day, after
'returning home, wet quite through her
'cloaths, from a place where her buſi-
'neſs had called her, was ſeized, as we
'ſat at dinner, with a ſtroke of the palſy,
'which at firſt affected her head, and
'deprived her of all her limbs. How-
'ever, ſhe recovered her ſenſes, I may
'ſay, ſooner than I did mine; for the
'condition ſhe was in, and the occaſion
'of it, left me very little uſe of my rea-
'ſon. The phyſician who attended her,
'and was my good friend, taking the
'greateſt care of her, without accepting
'any reward, but the pleaſure of doing
'a charitable action, declared that he
'had no hopes of her recovery but from
'the Bath waters, and offered to ſend
'with us a recommendation to one of
'his own profeſſion, who could well
'ſupply his place in care of her. You
'may imagine I did not heſitate a mo-
'ment in my reſolution of ſending her
'thither, notwithſtanding the bad ſtate
'of our circumſtances. I ſold directly
'all the furniture of our houſe, and
'every thing we had which could raiſe
'money; taking for my children a little
'hole, which would juſt contain them;
'and leaving them under the care of the
'eldeſt ſon and daughter, (who were
'more prudent than their ages pro-
'miſed) I, with my ſecond daughter,

'attended

attended my wife to Bath; where I had the joy, in about two months, to ſee her recover her health and limbs, excepting her hands, which ſtill remained ſo lame, that ſhe could not even dreſs herſelf. I never ſaw her ſo much affected with any thing: ſhe would have eſteemed herſelf happy, could ſhe have bought the uſe of her hand with the loſs of her foot; for ſhe looked on herſelf as a helpleſs burden to a diſtreſſed family. But, for once, I differed much from her, and rejoiced at the ſeat in which the diſtemper had fixed, if it would not quite leave her; as, by giving her the power of uſing exerciſe, I hoped her health might be preſerved, which in the other caſe could not be expected. After a pretty long trial, ſhe was told there was little poſſibility of her recovering her hand; and the weather growing fine, it was imagined air might be of more ſervice to her. This, and the low price of things in the country, made us determine to return no more to London; ſo, enquiring for the cheapeſt country in that part of the world, we removed to the borders of Wales; where we hired a ſmall houſe, and ſent for our children by the leaſt expenſive conveyance. When we had been there ſome time, I was induced to return to town, in order to get ſome redreſs, having been informed of a good opportunity of attempting it; but found the hopes that had been given me were very fallacious, and ſhould have ſoon returned, had I not been ſeized with a malignant fever; wherein, I verily believe, I muſt have periſhed for want, had not my phyſician aſſiſted me, ſtill more in the capacity of a friend than his profeſſion. I am now detained here by ſome buſineſs I am tranſacting for him; happy to have the power of giving ſome little token of my gratitude. As my recovery is yet but very imperfect, I come every morning to take a walk in the fields for the benefit of the air; which I find is a place much frequented likewiſe by this lady and yourſelf, whom I have often obſerved."

Here the poor man ended his ſtory, which had detained us a long time, even to the encroaching on an engagement of my lord's; but he would not interrupt a narration ſo hardly obtained. I could not forbear aſking after his wife, whether the country had not done her ſervice. He told me ſhe was juſt the ſame as when ſhe went into it; but, he thanked God, in very good health; and that he had contrived to prevent her knowing of his laſt illneſs. We parted from the poor man with heavy hearts; it lowered my ſpirits for the whole day, and filled my lord's thoughts for a longer time.

CHAP. XXIX.

LORD Dorcheſter made very diligent enquiry after our captain, to know the reality of what he ſaid; for people who would not miſapply their bounty, muſt be on their guard againſt what they hear, leſt truth ſhould be diſguiſed by falſhood, or clouded by partiality. His ſearch proved to the honour of the gentleman's veracity; for he learned every circumſtance from other hands. He was then not leſs earneſt in procuring him preferment; and, as there were many vacancies, he got the choice of two commiſſions. The next time we met our captain, my lord deſired he would come to his houſe that morning, and begged I would go along with him, that I might have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing how the poor man took the news of his preferment. I ſhould unwillingly have been abſent from this interview; therefore readily complied with his lordſhip's requeſt.

At the appointed hour the captain came, and was brought up ſtairs to us. The ſurprize he had been at firſt thrown into by ſo unexpected an invitation to the houſe of one of my lord's rank, and in a manner which ſeemed to promiſe him ſome benefit, ſtill was viſible when he entered. My lord aſked him if he wiſhed ſo much to be again in the king's ſervice as to like going to the Weſt Indies. The poor man anſwered, that he really did not; for his health was ſo bad, he feared he ſhould not be able to bear the change of climate; and his life was now of more importance than ever to his family, ſince his wife was entirely incapable of gaining the ſubſiſtence he could not leave her; which made him rather prefer his half-pay, than hazard a life, the loſs of which muſt bring ſo much diſtreſs on thoſe he loved to exceſs. Beſides, the troops were to ſet ſail ſo ſoon, that he ſhould not have time to bid his family, perhaps,

perhaps, a laſt adieu. My lord told him he was ſorry to hear this was his way of thinking, having got a majority for him in one of thoſe regiments. Notwithſtanding the reluctance the poor man had expreſſed to going abroad, yet he received this news with as much gratitude as if it had been the very thing he wiſhed. He acknowledged his obligations to my lord were infinite; made many exclamations on the uncommonneſs of his fortune, which had denied him all aſſiſtance from people who profeſſed themſelves his friends; had borne the appearance of it for a great number of years, and had even given him a right to expect they ſhould be really ſuch, by receiving obligations from his family; and now he had the higheſt benefits conferred by one entirely a ſtranger to him.

To this my lord replied, that he wiſhed what he had done had ſuited his inclination and circumſtances as much as he hoped it would. The captain then endeavoured to hide the regret which filled his heart, for fear of not appearing ſufficiently grateful. He told my lord the obligation was equal; he had ſupplied all his apparent wants. Of the particular temper of his mind his lordſhip could not be a judge; he had done all that compaſſion and generoſity could ſuggeſt to make him happy. 'And, Sir,' ſaid he, 'I hope my tears were the effect of a 'poor deſpondency: your goodneſs has 'raiſed better thoughts in me. The 'change of climate may repair my con'ſtitution; and I may, in a few years, 'return in health to my dear wife and 'children.' However, ſo far was his heart from the chearfulneſs he endeavoured to expreſs, that tears ran down his cheeks in ſpite of all his efforts to reſtrain them; and finding himſelf unable to controul emotions which he thought were a kind of ingratitude to his benefactor, he juſt ſummoned up ſtrength enough to return him thanks once more, and then went out of the room.

No ſooner was the door ſhut than the violence of his grief found it's way; and, with his unavailing endeavours to conceal it, I really feared would have deſtroyed him on the ſpot. We had followed him immediately, which heightened his diſtreſs, as he wiſhed to remain unſeen. When he got into the hall, my lord deſired him to accompany us into a parlour, of which we opened the door, and thereby preſented to his view his wife and children; my lord having ſent for them all up to town, in order to give him this joyful ſurprize, and to have the pleaſure of being witneſs to it, and to procure a meeting in caſe he had choſen to go to the Weſt Indies. Even the beloved Caroline knew not half my lord's purpoſe. I was ſoon apprehenſive we had done harm by the ſuddenneſs of this interview; for the captain fainted away inſtantly, and was ſo long a time before he was brought to himſelf, that I feared the joy had been too ſtrong for his weak thread of life. His wife ſeemed greatly terrified; and her behaviour indicated the affection which every action of her life had ſhewn. The recovery of his ſenſes reſtored the general joy; which increaſed to a great degree of extaſy, when my lord informed him that he had the choice of a majority in a regiment going to the Weſt Indies, or to be a captain of horſe here, (having received the promiſe of the latter after he ſent for his family) which he now imagined he would prefer: adding—'To leſſen the uneaſi'neſs you ſeem under for your fa'mily, here are bills to the value of fif'teen hundred pounds; and I will fur'niſh for you the houſe you ſhall take, 'let it be where it will.' Their joy roſe to a height that muſt have been painful: they looked on my lord with adoration, and gave way to raptures that would have forced a heart the moſt inſenſible to the ſenſations of others to partake of theirs. How much my lord did ſo, was viſible in his countenance; for I never ſaw any thing like the bliſs expreſſed in it: he ſeemed to feel a more ſolid delight than they did; and I can eaſily imagine he did ſo. I think their ſatisfaction could ſcarcely exceed mine; but his muſt be higher, as he had the inexpreſſible pleaſure of having been the cauſe of their happineſs, added to that of ſeeing it. Their expreſſions of gratitude were the moſt lively that could be; and they ſeemed not to know whether moſt to felicitate and careſs each other, or to thank their benefactor. They did both in a breath, and were in an agitation of joy ſcarcely to be imagined; till, on enumerating the comforts he had thus beſtowed on them, they all melted into tears with exceſs of delight: nor could either my lord or myſelf refrain from joining with them. This in ſome meaſure

ſure compoſed them; and they began to take leave of us with the moſt ardent acknowledgments. The captain aſked my lord pardon for the reluctance with which he received the firſt news of his bounty; adding, that he hoped his lordſhip would excuſe what was cauſed by the love of his wife, if he conſidered how very irkſome any gift would be to himſelf that ſhould oblige him to leave his lady. For he could ſee from his behaviour, as well as know it from the charms Nature had beſtowed on her, that he was a very ſtrong inſtance of conjugal affection. He concluded with wiſhing us to live to a happy old age together; and they bid us adieu, having raiſed bluſhes in both my lord and myſelf by their miſtake; and mine were increaſed by my lord's watching my countenance. I never before ſaw him do ſo ill-natured a thing, as to make any one ſuffer a moment's uneaſineſs even from baſhfulneſs.

I wondered why theſe people ſhould imagine us married. As a man may have many friends, but can have only one wife, the probability was, in my opinion, againſt them; and I could no otherwiſe account for an error that had ſo diſconcerted us both, than from a belief that it proceeded from the appearance of more affection in my lord's behaviour than was uſual between perſons united by no dearer tie than friendſhip. This conſtruction was too agreeable for me to perplex myſelf by ſeeking any other.

The happineſs I had of late enjoyed was doomed to be of ſhort continuance. The evening of the day in which my lord had given ſuch felicity by his generoſity to the diſtreſſed captain and his family, I went to an aſſembly. At my coming from thence, my footman was not to be found; and, to avoid the trouble of returning into a crouded room, I got into my chair, and went away without him. As my chairmen were carrying me under a dead wall that was in my road, they were ſtopped by ſome men, who pulled me out of my chair, and forced me into another, which they had brought for that purpoſe.

The place being little frequented, my ſcreams were not heard; and what little courage Nature had beſtowed on my chairmen was quite overcome by the ſuperior number of the enemy, and I was carried off without reſiſtance.

Every ſtep increaſed my terror: but yet, conſcious that the ſhrillneſs of a female voice muſt be almoſt as uſeful in populous ſtreets as a weapon of defence, I endeavoured to let down the windows of the chair, that I might the eaſier make myſelf heard. But this attempt I perceived in vain. I then broke a pane of glaſs; but, inſtead of receiving any benefit thereby, I found that they were caſed up with wood on the outſide; I ſuppoſe to prevent the very thing I intended. This diſcovery, however, explained to me the ſudden darkneſs which had immediately followed the putting me into the chair, and increaſed the terror which the other circumſtances alone would have rendered ſufficient.

However, unwilling to give up the hope of which I was thus in reaſon deprived, I exerted my voice to it's loudeſt key, flattering myſelf with a poſſibility that it might be diſtinguiſhed by ſome chance perſons paſſing cloſe to the chair, whoſe compaſſion might lead them to enquire the cauſe. But this effort only ſerved to ſpend my ſpirits the more entirely. The men who attended me, I imagined, kept every one elſe from coming within hearing; and we proceeded without moleſtation till we arrived at the houſe where we were deſigned to ſtop. The chairmen carried me into the hall: I was led into a dark room, and there left to my own thoughts, with ſubject for 'meditation even to madneſs.'

It would be in vain ſhould I attempt to deſcribe my terrors. I had heard of robberies and murders; I was not conſcious of having given ſuch offence to any one as ſhould incline them to perpetrate ſo horrid an action: but then ſo much ceremony ſeemed unneceſſary for a robbery, which might have been performed with more eaſe and expedition. Thus I remained terrified and perplexed, fearing every thing, yet fixing upon nothing, till I was almoſt diſtracted with my apprehenſions; from which I was at laſt relieved, by ſeeing the door open. The terrors of expectation were ſo increaſed by the approach of the danger which I feared, that, no longer able to ſupport the agonies it raiſed, life forſook me, and I fainted away before I could diſtinguiſh for whom the door was opened.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

MY horrors did not end with the fainting fit they had occaſioned. I came to myſelf in apprehenſions no leſs dreadful than if certain death had awaited me. Fear paints in very ſtrong colours. My imagination repreſented to me armed men, of moſt tremendous mien and mercileſs behaviour: it cloathed them, like the murderers in Macbeth, with the additional terrors they would wear, when one's ſelf was to become the victim of their cruelty.

I could not immediately venture to look up; and when I did, it was not directly that the appearance of a fine woman, richly and gaily dreſſed, could diſpel thoſe dreadful ideas from my brain. However, her endeavours to calm the fears ſhe had raiſed, at laſt ſucceeded; and, when ſhe perceived me, in ſome degree, come to my ſenſes, ſhe ſat down by me, with a countenance which, under a ſmile, tried to conceal dejection, anger, and diſdain; but ſo ineffectually, that at any other time every glance would have diſcompoſed and alarmed me: but I now beheld her with pleaſure; for, however terrible a woman's rage may be to a mind at eaſe, yet her face was more ſweet than Mercy and Benevolence, when compared to the grim murderers my fancy had formed.

She left me ſome leiſure to recover myſelf before ſhe broke ſilence; during which time I recollected her to be the Marchioneſs of Trente, whom I had often met in my viſits, though ſhe had never condeſcended to ſpeak to me, and had always caſt ſuch diſdainful glances upon me, as made me not more forward to court her acquaintance than ſhe ſeemed deſirous of cultivating mine: on the contrary, I uſed to keep at as great a diſtance as I could poſſibly, flying her as if my mind had ſome knowledge of the uneaſineſs I was to ſuffer from her.

At length, ſhe began thus: 'Though 'it may mortify my pride to confeſs my 'love to a ſucceſsful rival, yet my deſign 'requires I ſhould inform you, that I 'long entertained a particular affection 'for Lord Dorcheſter, and had once rea'ſon to believe it was not without re'turn; though now his views are more 'humble, and he confines his deſires to 'objects eaſier obtained. I cannot longer 'endure to ſee him thus debaſe himſelf, 'neglecting a ſtate of happineſs that 'might be as laſting as his life; but, as I 'do not chuſe to confer ſo great an obli'gation as I ſhould, by declaring my 'care for him, I have taken this method 'of conſulting at once his welfare and 'my own.'

She then offered me an income ſuperior to that he gave me, on condition I would promiſe, never, from that hour, to ſee, to write, or ſend any verbal meſſage to him.

With great warmth, I told her I would not enter into ſuch an engagement, could ſhe reward me with the poſſeſſion of all Europe: no, not to ſave my life; becauſe I believed I ſhould not be able to perform it; and I would never make a promiſe ſo contrary to my happineſs, as it would be bringing myſelf into an almoſt irreſiſtible temptation to break it.

'Wonderfully ſcrupulous, truly!' replied her ladyſhip. 'But how ignorant 'ſoever moſt people may be, you find my 'vigilant endeavours to diſcover you 'have not proved fruitleſs: and I muſt 'tell you, it would be more wiſe to accept 'the propoſal I have ſo generouſly made 'you, and to ſpend your time in making 'peace with heaven, and rendering your'ſelf fit for death, with which our mor'tality threatens us every hour, than 'perſiſt to glory in wickedneſs, with ſuch 'unparalleled impudence.'

I was ſo ignorant of the marchioneſs's meaning, that my anſwer could not be very much to the purpoſe; but it was ſpoke with that ſpirit which ſuch groundleſs, and, to me, unaccountable abuſe, could not fail of raiſing in a diſpoſition like mine. It's effect was natural; her temper was combuſtible, and, conſequently, being kindled by the fire in mine, burſt into flame. She roſe from her chair in a violent rage, telling me, ſhe would no longer give the power of choice to ſo inſolent a creature, but by force perform what I would not conſent to; for ſhe would convey me to ſuch a diſtance, that I ſhould no longer ſee and bewitch Lord Dorcheſter.

I was very ſenſible of the terrors of this menace; but could not ſtoop to one whoſe unworthy treatment of me gave little hope of redreſs from her compaſſion. What mercy can we expect from thoſe who are void even of juſtice? I told her with an air of indignation, that ſtill rendered me more qualified to converſe with her than I thought I could have been, that I would never conſent to my own unhap-

pineſs, whatever her power might inflict; adding, that it would not redound greatly to the honour of Lady Trente, to have made a woman unhappy, who deſerved no evil from her.

The marchioneſs did not deign to give me any anſwer beſide a diſdainful ſmile: then turning to a woman who was juſt come into the room, but had kept a ſtrict ſilence—'Herner,' ſaid ſhe, 'take this 'wretch under your care. See ſhe is 'well guarded, and that ſhe has no means 'of correſponding with any one, either 'before or after ſhe leaves this town. 'Watch her well on the road, but never 'converſe with her; for I could not for-'give any relation of mine who ſhould 'ſo far debaſe herſelf.'

The obſequious Herner curtſied, and promiſed exact obedience; and then they both departed, leaving me to my own reflections, which were not much interrupted for three days; for ſo long was I locked up in that room, where was no bed, by whoſe refreſhment I might alleviate either my mental or bodily uneaſineſs.

A little fire was afforded me, and a bare ſufficiency of meagre food, little ſuperior to bread and water. I have ſince had charity enough to believe, her ladyſhip thought faſting and mortification moſt ſalutiferous to my ſoul; of whoſe ſtate, it ſeems, ſhe had entertained no very favourable opinion. My door was never unlocked but to let in the neceſſary ſupports of my exiſtence; and all theſe offices were performed with ſuch ſilent gravity, as gave a greater air of melancholy and ſolemnity to a ſituation which, your ladyſhip will allow, was in none of it's circumſtances very lively and agreeable.

My chief attendant was a little girl of ten or eleven years old; who, whenever ſhe came in, ſtartled at me, as if I had been a monſter. If I ſpoke to her, ſhe would run away; and, if I offered to ſnatch hold of her, would ſcream as if I was going to murder her. If ſhe was obliged to paſs me, ſhe would take as large a circumference to avoid me, as if ſhe imagined I had drawn an enchanted circle round my chair. I need not ſay that my mind was in a very uneaſy ſtate. I had a love for freedom which ill agreed with impriſonment; and I hourly repined at having exchanged the pleaſures of Lord Dorcheſter's converſation for the moſt odious ſolitude, with no object to entertain my eyes, or raiſe new ideas in me; denied the ſound of a human voice, or any thing that might in any degree divert my thoughts from the pain of my preſent ſituation, or from the fears of what farther puniſhment might ſtill be in ſtore for me; without even the means of expoſing a body fatigued with want of reſt, and worn out with grief and terror. A mind leſs painfully affected than mine would have found ſome difficulty in ſleeping in an uneaſy chair: to me, it was ſo near impoſſible, that I had but a few moments reſpite from my anxious reflections the whole time I was there. Nothing more diſtreſſed me than the notion of my lord's uneaſineſs at my ſudden diſappearing; and I know not how I could have been ſupported under all the perplexity and perturbation of my mind, had I not formed great hopes of making my eſcape when time ſhould have abated the rigour of their vigilance, I thought I had ſo much greater reaſon to be diligent in diſcovering the means of getting from thence, than they could have for keeping me there, that I muſt at length be able to effect it. I flattered myſelf, that my lord's ſearch after me would give me another chance. I imagined he muſt hear of the violence with which I had been carried away; and could not doubt but his affection would contrive to reſcue me.

By theſe hopes I was kept from ſinking into abſolute deſpair; and the neceſſity of exerting ſome command over myſelf gave me ſpirit to go through three days of this painful confinement, with more fortitude than I could have expected. The third evening of this my enforced reſidence, Mrs. Herner made her appearance, and told me we were to go into the country the next morning. I aſked if the marchioneſs was to be of the party. To my inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, ſhe anſwered in the negative; but added, that I was to be guarded as carefully as if I was under her ladyſhip's eyes. Though, perhaps, ſhe might a little exceed her orders in her care for my convenience; for, ſhe could not but confeſs, my perſon, and the dignity which accompanied my grief, without any mixture of rage or impatience, had prejudiced her ſo much in my favour, that ſhe was ſorry ſhe was forbid converſing with me.

I could not help thanking her for her humanity. The leaſt inſtance of tenderneſs was now particularly dear to me. The compariſon my mind drew between her

her and her right honourable couſin, repreſented her in moſt advantageous colours. I immediately conceived hopes of finding favourable opportunities for my eſcape, either in my journey, or in my reſidence with one whoſe compaſſion might make her leſs deſirous of detaining me, conſequently leſs vigilant than the marchioneſs.

Before ſhe left me, I begged, that if I was ſtill to live with mutes, ſhe would give me a book; with which ſhe readily complied. Her complaiſance gave me no reaſon to admire her taſte. I ſhould have been very ſorry to have had my ſtudies long under her direction; however, ſimple as the book was, I preferred it to the chaos of my own mind; and was leſs offended at the folly of the author, than I ſhould have been at my own, in ſo long a ſeries of thoughts, as I was not inclined to bluſh for his fooliſhneſs. Before the marchioneſs went to bed, ſhe came into my dungeon, to renew the offers ſhe had at firſt made, in hopes, I ſuppoſe, that my captivity had humbled me; but, when ſhe found my reſolution remained unſhaken, ſhe informed me; that I was going to a family manſion, which was ſo very diſmal and forlorn, that it would make me repent my obſtinacy; and I might depend on ſpending my whole life there, unleſs I would agree to the terms propoſed.

My anſwer was, that nothing could appear ſo dreadful to me as loſing the converſation of Lord Dorcheſter, and leaving him in ſuch uncertainty concerning the occaſion of it.

The marchioneſs replied, that my rejecting her offer would not prevent the thing I ſeemed moſt to fear; ſince ſhe would take care he ſhould never more hear of me. Without any further diſcourſe, ſhe left the room.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

OPHELIA.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAP. I.

MRS. Herner and I ſet out at the very moment ſhe had appointed; for I ſoon found that ſhe was as regular as a pendulum. I could have wiſhed ſhe had borne a more extenſive reſemblance to a clock. Conſtant ticking, indeed, might have been too much; but had ſhe ſtruck, though it had been only once an hour, it would have been a great relief to me; for I felt an ardent longing to talk. Convinced by her ſex and age that ſhe was by inclination loquacious, I hoped to vanquiſh her obſtinate ſilence by the force of temptation, and accordingly aſked her various queſtions, and ſuch as I thought might be moſt intereſting; but without the leaſt effect; not a ſingle word in anſwer could I obtain; and at laſt deſiſted in deſpair, keeping the reſt of the day an inviolable ſilence.

As I had, for a conſiderable time, no employ but gazing at my fellow-traveller's outward form, I will make your ladyſhip my companion in it, by deſcribing her to you. Mrs. Herner was a little woman, near fifty years of age, very thin and brown; with a very long noſe and chin, hollow cheeks, wide mouth, ſcarcely any eye-brows, and light grey eyes; which, however, were not void of a ſweetneſs denoting ſome portion of good-humour in the mind that animated them. Dejection and humiliation appeared in her whole aſpect; her air, and every look, were prim and demure.

I once ſaw Mrs. Herner before I was taken priſoner by her couſin, and then learnt a little of her hiſtory, which I ſhall impart.

Mrs. Herner had originally a moderate fortune; and, on the death of the marchioneſs's mother, who was her couſin-german, and intimate friend, ſhe took the marchioneſs to live with her, being moved to compaſſion by her being left entirely deſtitute of a proviſion. Mrs. Herner, from the time ſhe firſt became poſſeſſed of her fortune, lived above her income; and though ſhe perceived the principal was every year decreaſing, ſhe had not prudence to retrench. The rank in which ſhe lived gave fair opportunity to the marchioneſs's charms to win her a more laſting proviſion than ſhe could have received from Mrs. Herner. Accordingly, before ſhe was eighteen, the Marquis of Trente ſaw her, and becoming truly enamoured, married her; but lived a very ſhort time after raiſing her to the rank and fortune which gave birth to her uncontrouled inſolence.

Mrs. Herner's fortune laſted a very few years beyond this marriage; and, by a ſtrange fatality, ſhe ſpent to the laſt ſhilling before ſhe attempted to leſſen her expences.

expences. When ſhe had no longer means to ſupport them, the marchioneſs ſeemed to hold out the hand of conſolation to her, inviting her home; but the poor woman ſoon found that pride, not generoſity, offered her this neceſſary relief; for the marchioneſs made her exchange poverty for wretchedneſs. She eſteemed ſo highly an act ſhe was bound in duty to perform, that, leſt Mrs. Herner ſhould be leſs ſenſible of the weight of the obligation, ſhe refreſhed her remembrance continually, and expected, in return for her charity, that ſhe ſhould undertake the care of her family, and comply with every inclination her ladyſhip ſhould condeſcend to ſignify. Her paſſions were extremely violent, and never appeared in ſuch full luſtre, as when her unhappy couſin was the object; for, as ſhe had no other dependence, ſhe knew ſhe muſt endure all.

Thus the poor woman, for a ſubſiſtence, ſold herſelf to the moſt abject ſlavery: but ſhe was too proud to take any other means of gaining a ſupport. *Pride that licks the duſt* ſhe had, but no true ſpirit; for, to pacify the marchioneſs in her furies, ſhe would deſcend to the meaneſt flattery; and was ruled by a frown or a nod. From a continual ſervile compliance with the will of another, ſhe loſt all liberty of thought, of which only one's own meanneſs can deprive one. She entirely forgot the method of pronouncing the word No: her language was compoſed of nothing but expreſſions of aſſent and affirmatives; and ſhe would contradict her own ſenſes as often as her violent and capricious couſin happened to err. So accuſtomed to obey, ſhe ſcarcely could find out terms that would expreſs her refuſal of the liberty ſhe dared not grant me. I ſometimes miſtook her negatives for conſent, and ſhould not have diſcovered my error had ſhe not checked me when I was going to act in conſequence of it.

In this *lively* manner did we travel for three days, without accident or interruption. But, the night of the third, as I was going to undreſs myſelf, after having ſat a little time meditating on my deplorable ſituation, I was alarmed with the cry of—'Fire! Murder! Rape! 'Beaſt! Brute! Savage!' The clamour I could diſtinguiſh to come from Mrs. Herner's room; and, thinking myſelf bound in duty to aſſiſt even my enemy, I ran to try what I could do towards her relief. When I entered, I perceived her with a double towel round her head, by way of night-cap, in a ſhort ragged bed-gown, ſtanding by a bed, in which was a man who held faſt by one corner of her little jerkin. I did not comprehend the motive for this detention, conſequently knew not the cauſe of her fear; but, ſenſible that I alone was not ſufficient to reſcue her from the arms of this giant, I attempted to open a door in the paſſage, in order to call in more uſeful people, but found it locked; the conſequence of my gaoler's care of me. Had I not been of a moſt charitable diſpoſition, reſentment might have prompted me to let her ſuffer by the means ſhe had taken to prolong my captivity; but I conquered the impulſe, and, taking the key out of her pocket, let in our hoſteſs and ſome of her ſervants, who, like myſelf, had been attracted by the noiſe.

Our landlady I found more equal to the taſk than I was: ſhe ſoon reſcued the timorous virgin, telling the gentleman with a very ſonorous voice, that ſhe wondered he, who was a *juſtice of the peace and quorum*, ſhould ſo diſturb a quiet family: for her part, ſhe would not ſuffer ſuch *normous* behaviour in her houſe, not even by his *honour's worſhip*.

He, with a voice that denoted much ſleepineſs, replied—'Woman, hold thy 'brawling: I have not diſturbed thy 'curſed houſe; I was ſleeping quietly 'when that wench waked me. She has 'a mind to coy it a little now; but the 'jade was willing enough to come to bed 'to me before I aſked her. I did not 'want company; but I ſcorn to diſappoint a woman: and I ſhall have her 'ſtill for all thy clamour; for I know 'ſhe is kind at bottom.'

At this declaration, Mrs. Herner ſcreamed out—'O ſave me! Preſerve my 'honour! Do not let the wicked wretch 'come near me!' and caught up a candle to light her in her flight. Being obliged to paſs by the ſide of the bed, in order to get to the door, the man had a much more perfect view of the affrighted fair than he had before, whoſe appearance, I muſt confeſs, was not very alluring; for her lips were greaſed with tallow, her eyes done thinly over with a dark-coloured ointment, and the reſt of her face covered with thick cream not quite dry; and, through ſome 'chinks 'which time had made' in her bed-gown, her yellow ſkin ſhone reſplendent; ſo like gold

gold through a netted purſe, that it could charm nothing but a miſer. He beheld her with aſtoniſhment for near a minute; and then, with all the appearance of ſcorn and diſtaſte that his countenance could wear, which was better ſuited to ſuch expreſſions than to any of a gentler kind, he cried out—"Wicked wretch!" Not ſo 'wicked as to want thy company, thou 'witch, thou monſter! Full light would 'better have obtained thy releaſe than all 'thy ſtruggling. Have ſuch a hag as 'thee by my ſide! I had rather have 'Fowler or my crop horſe for my bed-'fellow.' This adventure ſhocked me ſtrangely: there ſeemed an enormity of wickedneſs in this man that amazed me; but yet, when he had thus addreſſed a figure which had ſurprized me almoſt as much as it had done him, I could not reſtrain a ſmile. As I was near the candles, he perceived it; and, looking at me, (after the ſhort preface of an oath)—'That's 'a pretty laſs, faith,' ſaid he, 'and looks 'good-natured and merry. I love a 'hoddy girl hugely, that will make one 'laugh, and laugh with one, and ſhare 'a pot of good October when a man has 'no better company: ſuch a wench is 'worth fighting for—and I will have her 'inſtead of thee, thou ſuccubus, who art 'nothing like a woman but in thy brawl-'ing.' I was not more valiant than Mrs. Herner; but, being much more nimble, I ran out of the room with the utmoſt ſpeed. Not unmindful of the opportunity of the double eſcape I had to effect, and as deſirous of getting free from woman as from man, I ran through the door I had opened, and got into the yard; but was there overtaken by Mrs. Herner, in freſco as before, with the reſt of the family at her heels.

As ſoon as I diſappeared, ſhe recollected the deſire I might have; and not finding me in my room, was as clamorous at my eſcape as ſhe had been about her own detention. Without ſtaying for an increaſe of cloathing, ſhe ran after me; and it is no wonder that, unincumbered by the weight of dreſs, ſhe overtook me, whoſe flight had been retarded by not knowing where to go. I cannot pretend to ſay what vengeance I might have taken at being thus diſappointed of my purpoſe, had not the ſervants of the inn revenged my cauſe with ſome ſucceſs, by hooting at her figure, and burſting into ſuch immoderate peals of laughter, that our hoſteſs at laſt thought it incumbent on her to reſent it; and, with a ſhrill pipe, called out—'What do the villains mean? 'Muſt you affront a gentlewoman, truly? 'Did you never ſee a woman in her 'ſmock before? If Madam's lips are 'chapped, and her eyes ſore, what's the 'matter of that? it is nobody's buſineſs 'but her own, ſure! Such fine tallow as 'we burn would not diſgrace the mouth 'of the fineſt dutcheſs in the land: it is 'as ſweet as a nut, and much more '*healinger* than all their *curous* ſalves: 'As for her eyes, why eyes ſhould be 'black, ſhould not they? and what ſig-'nifies whether outſide or in, or inſide or 'out, it's much the ſame thing.'

This eloquent oration a little ſuſpended the laugh; but they took in no more matter for mirth, that the time might not be loſt, ſtaring, without interruption, at the object of it; for the good landlady, determined Mrs. Herner ſhould hear how well ſhe defended her cauſe, kept faſt hold of her till her flow of oratory ceaſed. When we were conducted up ſtairs, I was again locked up till morning, and then I attended Mrs. Herner, to whom another room had been given. At breakfaſt, our landlady came to pay her compliments of enquiry after the health of the poor affrighted lady, which was not a little impaired by the night's adventure, her fears laſting longer than her danger; for ſhe told us it communicated itſelf even to her dreams.

As ſhe condeſcended to talk with our hoſteſs, though not to converſe with me, I learnt the occaſion of the diſturbance; which was no other than a ſmall error in the gentleman, whoſe intellects were a little troubled by too hard drinking, in celebration of a fox-chace, in which he had been engaged that day: for, in going up ſtairs to bed, he had miſtaken Mrs. Herner's room for his own, and taken poſſeſſion of it.

In the courſe of this converſation, I found nothing had ſo ſenſibly hurt Mrs. Herner, as the ſquire's affronting her charms. When ſhe had heard our hoſteſs's account, ſhe ſaid that, indeed, by his ſtrange boiſterouſneſs, ſhe at firſt ſuſpected he had drank a little too much; but did not find out till afterwards, how totally he was deprived of his ſenſes; of one ſenſe at leaſt; for the man was certainly blind. The hurry and buſtle that enſued, ſhe ſuppoſed, had increaſed the effects of the liquor; for he ſeemed in full poſſeſſion of his judgment at firſt, only

his

his paſſions were a little too much elevated to bear, with proper compoſure, the view of temptation: thus attributing to the fumes of intoxication the honeſt impulſe of nature, which made diſguſt the conſequence of a full view of her perſon.

Mrs. Herner hinted, that it was incumbent on him, as a gentleman, to aſk pardon for the outrage he had committed. 'So I told him, Madam,' replied the landlady; 'and what think you he anſwered to this? Why, truly, taking me very ſhort, and ſwearing like a trooper, he ſaid, not he, he ſhould aſk no pardon, nor make no defences: he had made the gentlewoman a very civil proffer; ſhe might not receive the like for many a day; and, he thought, if ſhe believed him in earneſt, ſhe had more reaſon to come and thank him than he to aſk her any pardons. Oh! Madam, he is a ſad ribaldry gentleman,' added the landlady.

I ſaw Mrs. Herner could have excuſed the warmth of the good woman's reſentment, which led her to ſo faithful a repetition of the ſquire's words; but, with ſome change of colour, ſhe at laſt ſagaciouſly obſerved, that every one had a ſenſe only of the charms of their own ſpecies. She never heard of a bat that preferred the elegant pheaſant to it's own leather-winged race, nor of a hedge-hog that was not fonder of it's own ſhapeleſs kind than of the beautiful peacock.

Our converſation ended with breakfaſt, and we left the inn to proceed on our journey, that now drew to a concluſion; which, as I had received a ſtrange notion of the confuſion in inns, from what I had experienced, would not have been a diſagreeable circumſtance to me, had I not flattered myſelf that from it ſome opportunity of an eſcape might ariſe.

CHAP. II.

OUR landlady had entertained us with an invective againſt drunkenneſs, (though her complexion bore ſome tokens of leſs inveteracy againſt that vice) which employed my thoughts for part of the day. Nothing I had ſeen in this country more aſtoniſhed me than that for ſo trifling a pleaſure as liquor could afford, any one ſhould relinquiſh reaſon, that beſt gift of the Great Creator. It is inconſiſtent with the pride of man thus to deſtroy the ſource of all his inſolence and preſumption. But the terms in which this vice was reproached offended me. 'The debaſing themſelves to the condition of brutes,' was an expreſſion I thought very unjuſt. Perhaps many, even when not intoxicated, have no right to be inrolled in ſo honourable a claſs; but, when deprived of all ſenſe and reaſon, ſurely they ought not to be compared to that generation, who act conformably to the will of their Creator, and to their rank amongſt the animal tribes. Some, indeed, by living amongſt mankind, loſe a little of their native temperance, and acquire bad qualities: ſuch is the force of example! Void of knowledge of good and evil, they are qualified to walk in the way ordained for them, but not to reſiſt the infection of the grand corrupter, man.

There is nothing ſo mean as people who are artificially inſenſible: vegetation produces more uſeful materials; a tree, for inſtance, properly manufactured, ſupports a paſſenger, fills up a gap, or, if worn out by long ſervice, it ſhould be condemned, it blazes to warm us, fulfils it's part, and is a uſeful member among created beings, in compariſon of a man addicted to drunkenneſs. But, perhaps, your ladyſhip will think I put an affront both on you and myſelf, by exclaiming at ſo undeſerving a ſubject, unworthy of employing your thoughts, and my pen; therefore I will leave it for my journey, which ended the evening we left our turbulent inn.

We arrived at the marchioneſs's caſtle a little before it was dark, which afforded me an opportunity of ſeeing it, though the view did not greatly conduce to my ſatisfaction.

We firſt paſſed a moat, over which was a bridge ſo impaired by time and damp that it threatened us with no ſmall chance of viſiting the frogs who inhabited underneath. I could not help thinking, that they ſaw us approach; and, taking us for the ſucceſſor of their former king, the hoarſe nation was once more ready to croak—'God ſave King Log!' but afterwards found the noiſe was uſual, and only the reſult of numbers, from which among frogs as well as men, a general hum ariſes.

The caſtle was then tottering with age, and may now perhaps, by the irreſiſtible arm of old Time, be levelled to the ground: therefore I ſhall ſpeak of the brick only in the paſt tenſe. The rooms were extremely large, wainſcotted with

oak, which was turned almoſt as black as ebony; and all the light that entered was from ſmall caſements, with a larger proportion of lead and iron than glaſs. The chimneys were as big as the arch of a large bridge. The beds were higher than ſome rooms; and all the furniture large and clumſy, except the chairs, whoſe ſeats were ſtuffed with admirable art, being harder than a tennis-ball, and riſing in the middle in imitation of a pyramid.

The hall was hung round with a moſt uncomely repreſentation of the Marquis of Trente's anceſtors, except in two ſlips, which were filled with rolls of parchment of a prodigious length, bearing, in the figure of a tree, the genealogy of the whole race. If a poor babe died in it's birth, it's memory was ſtill preſerved, under the dignifying repreſentation of a little twig; but a miſcarriage was honoured no farther than in being marked as a knot in the trunk. I could not but admire this care, leſt Vanity ſhould die for want of food, where few flatterers could come without feeling their conſciences ſo affected by the ſolemnity of the place, as muſt have reduced them to ſpeak truth. The garden was not, in extent, equal to the ſize of the houſe; but what there was of it, was laid out in narrow gravel-walks, then over-grown with weeds, bordered with box, and ornamented in quarters with yew-ſwans, laurel-bears, holly-dogs, and box-chickens; their colours happily variegated by the dead branches, which made up about three quarters of the animal; to the great eaſe of the gardener, who was thereby ſaved the care of watching over this his creation, leſt their ſhapes ſhould be deſtroyed by the irregular growth of ſome luxuriant branches. The wall of the garden was almoſt the extent of our proſpect. We were not in the ſeaſon for flowers; but had all the 'perfumes of Arabia' been diſperſed about the houſe, they could not have got the better of the ſtench ariſing from the moat.

You may imagine that our ſituation was better ſuited to the dark than to the day: but in this you are miſtaken; for the horrors of the night exceeded all the diſmal proſpects the ſun could ſhew us. With the twilight our concert began. The firſt performance was a great houſe-dog, that would ſuffer no noiſe but his own, inceſſantly howling or barking. Every hearth was full of crickets, that chirped the live-long night; but had none of thoſe lively notes which Milton celebrates as the ſound of mirth. The old towers of the houſe were filled with owls of every ſort, who, by their hoarſe hooting, and their ſhrill ſhrieking, bore no inconſiderable part in the concert, of which the froggery made the baſs. Theſe vocal performers were accompanied by all the modulations of a bleak winter's wind; which, gathering in various paſſages of that rambling houſe, made a continual whiſtling, even in the mildeſt weather roared in the chimnies, and blew in at a thouſand crevices in the ſhattered wainſcot.

Diſmal as this ſcene muſt appear, I found that had I not retained very ſtrong affections for abſent objects, I could have been happy even here, if every face had not worn an air of wretchedneſs. Excluding the ſuffering hours of reflection, I was the only perſon in the place that did not appear in ſuch a deep and ſettled deſpondency, as made me fear that I ſhould, at ſome time, find all the family hanging in their garters; as I had learned that it was no uncommon thing in this kingdom for people to ſign their own paſſports into the next world as ſoon as they are tired of this.

A general melancholy ran through every ſpecies: there was a monkey who was ſo infected by his ſituation, that he might have walked chief-mourner at a funeral; a parrot, who, ceaſing to be articulate, uttered no ſound but that of a piteous ſigh. The ſervants had ſlit a magpye's tongue, in order to make it as converſible as themſelves; but had never been able to teach it any other words than 'Heigh-ho!' The kittens were there, from the hour of their birth, more ſerious than old cats; who have, in other places, been the inſeparable companions of ancient virgins. There was not a lamb, colt, or any other creature, however youthful, that did not walk with more ſolemnity than an archbiſhop in a publick proceſſion.

Poor Mrs. Herner was full as miſerable as myſelf, or any of the inhabitants; grief had ſo relaxed every muſcle, that there were none but long faces in the houſe. Mrs. Herner's fell away very faſt; and I dare ſay, had we ſtaid a month longer, would have come up to the general ſtandard. I cannot but confeſs I felt mine lengthen conſiderably;

though I was treated with great lenity by my gaoler, who kindly ſtudied my eaſe and convenience, as far as the place would permit; but kept as ſtrictly to her vow of ſilence as if it had been the road to ſalvation. The greateſt indulgence ſhe could grant me, was in giving me leave to frequent a library, wherein I found ſome good hiſtories. Here, when I could baniſh reflection, and the regret which was the conſequence of it, I could, for ſome hours, enjoy the pleaſures of ſociety; and, forgetting the lonely ſolitude to which I was confined, could tranſport myſelf to ſcenes of hurry and tumult, and amuſe myſelf with a conſtant courſe of novelty. But it was ſeldom I could bring myſelf into a proper temper to taſte this pleaſure; and the ſeldomer, as the dampneſs of the place, joined with vexation and anxiety, ſoon affected my health.

The country around us was all quagmires and bogs, which rendered it impoſſible to take any exerciſe at that ſeaſon of the year, except in the melancholy garden; and though I had no objection to walking 'with the beaſt, joint-tenant 'of the ſhade,' yet I could not extend my love of ſociety to the reptile likewiſe; and the garden was ſo over-run with frogs and toads, that it was impoſſible to walk there without having multitudes of them for companions. This total want of exerciſe, I ſuppoſe, had ſome ſmall ſhare in impairing my conſtitution, having been always uſed to a contrary way of life. I was ſo ſenſible of ſuffering from it, that nothing but experience could convince me that there was no poſſibility of going beyond the moat: however, having been almoſt ſwallowed up in a bog, and giving my guard (for I was not permitted to ſtir without one) a violent cold, I had no great inclination for any farther attempt; and leſs ſtill was any one inclined to accompany me.

We had not been many days in our ſolitude, before we received a viſit from Mr. South, a young clergyman in the neighbourhood; a very well bred, ſenſible, and worthy man, of an exceeding good family, and educated ſuitably to it: but being the younger of many brothers, he was glad to accept of a living near this place, though the manners of the neighbouring gentlemen were not agreeable to him. However, he converſed leſs with them than with his books, and the poor of the pariſh, whom he much viſited in order to inſtruct and guide their minds, and learn and relieve their neceſſities; for he denied himſelf many of the gratifications of life, in order to communicate to others the conveniences and comforts which they could not afford themſelves. He ſacrificed his money to their indigence, and his time to their inſtruction; acting the part of ſchoolmaſter to the children, as well as that of a truly ſpiritual guide to their parents. From one of ſuch a diſpoſition every viſit muſt be welcome; and, I could perceive, was not leſs ſo to Mrs. Herner than myſelf; for ſhe preſſed him to repeat them, which he did as often as his leiſure would permit; for, to a man who ſo laborioufly performs his duty, a large pariſh is almoſt a conſtant employ: and though we might ſoon perceive, and I was afterwards more fully convinced, that his pleaſanteſt occupation was viſiting us, yet would he not ſuffer it to break in upon his duty.

I have already obſerved, that Mr. South's viſits were agreeable; and your ladyſhip will not think this ſo improbable as to require any farther aſſurance of it: but what will you ſay, if I own, that the love of talking rendered other company eligible, who had no other recommendation than taking the embargo off my ſpeech, and ſuffering me to export a few thoughts with which I was overſtocked? Depraved appetites are apt to have ſtrange conſequences: the love of talking, to thoſe with whom we cannot converſe, argues great depravity of mind; and the reſult of it was, that I rejoiced at the arrival of ſome country neighbours, of whoſe intended viſit we had notice before they came; and, as they were characters new and ſtrange to me, I will give you the account of them, which I learned from Mr. South after their departure, as ſome excuſe for my being diverted with them; for novelty is allowed a right to entertain.

CHAP. III.

THE Marchioneſs of Trente was rendered a perſon of great conſequence to the ſportſmen in the neighbourhood, by the poſſeſſion of a very extenſive manor: and to the deſire of courting her favour we owed the viſits we received from three; by name, Mr. Rumford, Mr. Darking, and Mr. Giles. The

The two firſt were preceded by their wives, the latter by his wife and ſiſter; for the gentlemen did not think a viſit to two women a ſufficient recompence for giving up their uſual amuſements; and therefore hunted all the way between their houſe and ours, which ſeparated them from their families, who came early, to ſhew their deſire of being good neighbours. Mrs. Giles, and her ſiſter Mrs. Martha Giles, ſat next me; and the former being of a communicative temper, was grown ſo very intimate with me, that, when the gentlemen came in, ſhe was making me the confidante of her political ſentiments, beginning by an enquiry after the new pamphlets that had been lately publiſhed: for that the nation was now in ſuch imminent danger of loſing it's liberty, that ſhe could not help being very deſirous to peruſe all the ſchemes propoſed towards redreſſing the grievances we laboured under; adding, that an additional inducement was the hope that ſome of them might convince her ſiſter into how many errors ſhe was led by her attachment to a monarchical government, which entirely blinded her to all the bleſſings of a republick. 'Miſs, 'would you believe,' continued this female politician, 'that ſhe is ſo ſtrangely 'prejudiced, as to deteſt the character 'of the great, the glorious Oliver Cromwell, and will not allow there is any 'tolerable reaſoning, or, indeed, any 'thing but impious blaſphemies, in the 'admirable books written to prove that 'killing a tyrant is no murder? She 'grieves, with all the ſolemnity of affliction, every Thirtieth of January, and 'is as inconſolable as if the perſon ſhe 'moſt loves was juſt expired. Then, 'Miſs, ſhe is proportionably elated on 'the fatal day wherein the glorious 'thread of Cromwell's life was cut; 'and, old and aſthmatical as you ſee 'her, ſings and dances like a diſtracted 'thing: nor has complaiſance enough 'to me to conceal the leaſt part of her 'joy, though ſhe knows my ſoul is then 'overwhelmed with ſorrow. Never believe me, Miſs, if her room is not hung round with the pictures, in her phraſe, 'of the bleſſed martyrs; and yet really, 'in other things, ſiſter Giles is a good 'ſort of a woman: and, were it not for 'theſe prejudices, which ſhe has imbibed from the ſervile notions of thoſe 'that educated her, I ſhould have been 'very happy in her friendſhip; but, 'ignorant of the charms of glorious li'berty, ſhe is as little able to bear my 'more extenſive view of things, as I am 'to endure her narrowneſs of mind.'

Mr. Giles, it ſeems, knew his ſiſter too well to be in doubt of the ſubject on which he ſaw her ſo very loquacious, and cried out—'What, you're teazing 'Miſs with your politicks, I ſuppoſe? 'What the devil have women to do with 'the nation! You want a petticoat go'vernment, I warrant? Was I king, I 'would make an univerſal Salick law, 'that ſhould not allow you the govern'ment of your own lap-dogs!'

'Really, brother,' replied Mrs. Martha, 'you but expoſe yourſelf by de'claring your averſion to the moſt in'tereſting of ſubjects. However meanly 'you may think of my ſex, I muſt in'form you that my views are nobler 'than your's; and if you are contented 'to move in no higher a ſphere than the 'dominion over your ſtable or dog'kennel, I find my genius leads me to 'reflect on the beſt manners of ruling a 'ſtate: I cannot help being anxious to 'ſee how things are ordered at the 'helm.'

'Hem!' exclaimed the ſquire. 'Steer 'your family; ſee if you are pilot enough 'to guide that in it's proper courſe! Go 'to your diſtaff, the proper female ſcep'tre! However trifling you may think 'the command of my dog-kennel, I 'would not truſt you with the govern'ment of it, though I had not ſo valuable 'a bitch as Mopſey, who deſerves the 'care of the greateſt man in the nation.'

With a look of the moſt ſovereign contempt, as diſdaining to return an anſwer, ſhe turned her back to him, and whiſpered me—'This is always his way, 'Miſs: would it not provoke a ſaint? 'But this is the conſequence of having 'an underſtanding more cultivated than 'the illiterate neighbourhood one has 'the misfortune to be born in, people totally ignorant of the policies of nations. Their pride will not allow one 'any peace. He does not treat ſiſter 'Giles with any more ceremony; and, 'between you and me, Miſs, (but one 'would not have thoſe things repeated) 'ſhe once reſented this behaviour ſo 'much, that they were going to part 'upon it, and ſhe and I were to have 'lived together, removing to ſome place 'where we might have converſed with

'persons of more refined understandings. But while they were bartering about the terms of a separate maintenance, a political dispute arose between her and myself; which convinced me so fully of the impossibility of ever bringing her to reason on that subject, that I declared against living with her; and a reconciliation between them ensued.'

I know not when my political friend would have done talking, had she not been interrupted by Mrs. Darking, who came up to me, and enquired after the reigning diversions in London; expressing great joy at seeing one who was come from among Christians, and compassionating me for having left them for a land of brutes.

Mrs. Herner, before any company came, advised me, on no account, to mention my being brought thither by force; but to pretend that a desire of accompanying her, during her stay there, was my motive. Though I was sensible my taste would not receive much honour from this concealment, yet, as it was my interest not to offend her, and I perceived no advantage likely to accrue from refusing to comply, I told her that, as far as silence would give my detention the air of choice, I had no objection; but she must excuse my intimating a falshood, much more my telling a palpable untruth. I now found she took this office on herself; for, upon hearing Mrs. Darking's condolances, she told her I was not worthy of her pity, since I had been so kind as to give her my company from the desire of retiring from the hurry of London.

This gave Mr. Darking an opportunity of exultation, crying out—'There's 'a wife young woman, now! So much 'wisdom in youth is marvelious! What 'a happy man her husband will be, if 'marriage does not alter her as much as 'it did my fool!—See, Betty, how much 'a *betterer* figure that young gentlewoman makes than thee do with all thy 'whims, thy figaries, and nonsensical 'fancies and whinings!'

Mrs. Darking answered, with an indolent air, that the young lady would be a better judge of her own taste when she had lived a little among brutes; with a contemptuous smile and significant glance, which very intelligibly told him he was signified under the last word of her speech.

This lady, I afterwards learned, had been bred in town; where, for a punishment of his sins, Mr. Darking was called by a law-suit, in which he was engaged with a gentleman who had hunted and killed a hare in his manor.

While he was in London, he met with this lady, who, destitute of fortune, lived with a maiden aunt, of a temper by no means easy, and whose sole support was an annuity. The necessity of finding some more certain provision, made her omit no endeavours to please; and so general were her views, that her sentiments changed with every unmarried man's opinion; whatever he seemed to like she immediately became.

This conformable disposition led her to declare a detestation of a town-life, whenever Mr. Darking was in company; and so successfully did she expatiate on the sweet innocence and tranquil regularity enjoyed in the country, that he was convinced her conformity to the gaieties of London was a painful necessity, from which she sighed to be delivered. He had been a good deal captivated by her beauty, from the first time he had seen her; and this amiable disposition compleated her conquest. But still, warily determined to be certain of the happiness which, he was inclined to think, must be the consequence of his possessing such a wife, he examined into her knowledge of family-affairs; and was charmed to hear her talk of the inspecting a dairy, and the well-ordering a family, as the greatest pleasures in life, and as things in which she was well skilled. All his doubts being dispelled, he ventured to make his proposals; and, through mere œconomy, overlooked her want of fortune. He had been early taught that wholesome precept, that 'a penny saved, is a penny got;' and, learnedly arguing on that principle, convinced himself that so good a housewife was the best treasure, since no extraordinary settlements were demanded in consideration of a woman's virtues; and therefore his estate would not be tied up as if he married a great fortune: and from hence he drew a conclusion in her favour, that 'money saved, was money 'got.'

Mr. Darking was not made to wait long for the lady's consent. They had proverbs on their side, as much in recommendation of a speedy marriage as he had. There was no text on which the old aunt was more eloquent, than that

'Delays

'Delays are dangerous.'—'Thoſe that 'will not when they may,' &c. &c. 'A bird in the hand is worth two in 'the buſh;' and ſome others to that purpoſe: mortifying experience having ſo fully convinced her of the juſtneſs of them, that ſhe rivalled the renowned Sancho Panza in retailing of proverbs. As ſoon as Mr. Darking was married, he conducted his bride to the country for which he had ſighed; where he found that reflection is ſo infallible a ſource of wiſdom, that he might have acquired ſome from his favourite amuſements, which would have taught him, that the fowler never ſpreads the nets after having caught the birds. All the ſnares ſhe laid for him appeared henceforward uſeleſs: art was now diſclaimed; ſhe freely ſhewed her diſlike of every thing ſhe had declared herſelf fond of, laughed at his friends, deſpiſed his neighbours, deteſted country entertainments, never thought of œconomy, but to ſhew ſhe ſcorned ſuch trifles and low offices; and grew vapoured and peeviſh.

Mr. Darking was not ſo blinded by love, but that he grew outrageous at this diſappointment; for however blind Cupid may be repreſented, the hymeneal torch lights him ſo well, as to render him admirably quick-ſighted to the faults of a wedded mate. Cupid, as your ladyſhip muſt have perceived, in many inſtances, before he becomes linked with Hymen, is generally as different from what he is after that union, as a bee and a ſerpent. In the firſt ſtate, his whole application is to gather ſweets from every thing; there is not a circumſtance but he can make to produce ſomething valuable; but after this melancholy change, he as induſtriouſly collects poiſon, and in the ſmalleſt trifles can diſcover baleful qualities. If I was to undergo a metamorphoſis, it ſhould be of a bee into a ſerpent, as an allegorical deſcription of the tranſformation of a lover into a huſband; a more diſmal change than that of the induſtrious Arachne into a ſpider, the melancholy Philomela into a plaintive nightingale, or any other that Ovid celebrates. But to put an end to a digreſſion which no one from her own fate has ſo little reaſon to make as myſelf, I ſhall return to this ill-matched pair.

As Mr. Darking was not bleſſed with delicacy of voice or manner, his rage broke forth into ſounds ſo harſh, and geſtures ſo alarming, as greatly terrified the gentle lady, and made her determine to endeavour to comply with his inclinations. But, during the trial, his dairy was ſpoiled through neglect and ignorance, his family and viſitors half-ſtarved; for which he received no other apology, than how ſhould ſhe gueſs that the vulgar robuſt animals would devour whole hecatombs; and all regularity baniſhed from his houſe; the order for dinner being often forgot till the time it ſhould have been ready. He tried to make her uſeful by the ſame means as he had brought her to attempt to obey him; but finding it eaſier to fright than to alter her, he gave her up as incorrigible; deſiring her to reſign the management of his houſe, and keep within the confines of her own apartment.

Not long after this Mrs. Darking proved with child; which reſtored her to her huſband's favour, as it ſhewed her of ſome uſe. She perceived by his behaviour how much he was intereſted in the fate of the unborn babe, and therefore made it the means of acquiring ſome indulgences which otherwiſe would not have been granted to her. She daily encroached on the liberties thus obtained, till at laſt ſhe ventured to expreſs a longing to lie-in in London, which, if diſappointed, ſhe feared might prove fatal to the child. Mr. Darking would have been truly alarmed, had he believed it could be marked with the repreſentation of any party of a town he ſo much hated; but never having heard of that effect from any ſuch longing, he refuſed to comply, ſwearing that no child of his ſhould breathe that pernicious air: he had ſuffered enough by going thither, to make him careful to be the laſt of his family who ſhould ever run themſelves into any ſuch ſcrape. But finding his lady ſickened, from the ſteadineſs with which he had adhered to this reſolution, he began to be under ſome apprehenſions for the conſequences; ſo that, to make her eaſier, he promiſed to carry her there as ſoon as ſhe was recovered from her lying-in. This aſſurance kept up her ſpirits ſo well, that it enabled her to bring into the world a fine boy, who was joyfully received by his father; but the journey to London expired at the child's birth. It was a promiſe Mr. Darking never meant to keep, nor could he

he be induced to perform it by her falling ill on the diſappointment; her health was no longer of importance.

She had ſeveral more children; but found that her pregnancy was not to meet with the ſame indulgences after the valuable heir-apparent was born. Mr. Darking had the children brought up wild. Though the two youngeſt were daughters, yet he would not permit a maid-ſervant to come near them, except juſt to put on their cloaths. The greateſt part of their time was ſpent in the ſtables, and the ſtable-boys were their play-fellows.

The poor wife, who was in the contrary extreme, being the exceſs of delicacy, and thought a girl ought not to ſet eyes even on a baby that was not of the *feminine gender*, looked on compliance in this point as criminal; from which aroſe a never-ceaſing conteſt between her and her huſband, whereby the children were the innocent ſufferers. Each ordered them to rebel againſt the commands of the other: ſhe chaſtiſed them if they obeyed their father; and he, as he called it, *trounced* them if they complied with their mother; till by the double application of that great inſtructor the rod, they ſoon grew ſo exceeding wiſe, as to deſpiſe both their parents, learning from each the other's foibles and errors, much ſooner than their own underſtandings could have diſcovered them.

Mrs. Rumford, the only lady that now remains unmentioned, was much better ſuited to her ſituation. Nature ſeemed to have formed her for the care of her houſe and dairy; and had not Mr. Rumford declared her to be the wife of his boſom, one might have taken her for his cook or his dairy-maid; though poetry has been ſo much the friend of the latter claſs, that to have gueſſed her one would have been no ſmall compliment. She was as much charmed with my ſuppoſed love of the country as Mr. Darking, and was very eloquent in behalf of the pleaſures of domeſtick buſineſs. My regard for truth would ſcarcely ſuffer me to receive the praiſes given me with ſo little reaſon; and I believe I ſhould not have permitted them to continue in their error, could I have prevailed on myſelf to have expoſed any one to ſo much contempt as I imagined Mrs. Herner muſt have incurred from being convicted of telling a voluntary lye.

CHAP. IV.

A Very conſiderable part of the company yet remains unmentioned; though, perhaps, were the men to direct, I might have given them the precedency. Theſe were the ſquires faithful companions, their dogs, who followed them into the room, which they entered with a loud cry of 'Halloo! halloo!' that at firſt greatly alarmed me; but ſeeing no emotion in the countenance of any other perſon in company, and finding Mrs. Martha did not ſuſpend her cares for the nation, I was ſenſible my fears muſt be groundleſs. Mrs. Herner knew too well the regard due to theſe dogs to expel them her dining-room; the conſequence of which was it's being ſo filled with them, that there was no moving without treading upon one, falling over another, and making confuſion among them all, they ſnarling and growling at every one who was ſo unlucky as to tread on them; while the ſquires, to increaſe the clamour, cried out—'Ware, Hector! 'ware, Juno!' according to the names of the dogs in danger.

Dinner at laſt appeared. At the ſight of a ſirloin of beef, the ſquires ſet up what I found they called the dead halloo, and cried out—'To-un, boys, to-'un! The beſt beaſt in Chriſtendom, 'though he would give but a ſcurvy 'chace;' and while the ladies were ceremoniouſly adjuſting the important article of place, ſat themſelves at the table, obſerving that the firſt cut of a ſirloin of beef was better than the fineſt compliments in the world. As ſoon as dinner was ended, the chace was celebrated, the ſtag once more run down, all it's arts for eſcape remembered, the victory of the dogs ſung in ſongs of triumph, every victor receiving his diſtinct praiſes and careſſes. When the ſtag was killed in ſtory as well as in fact, and all the ſongs on the ſubject had been ſung with voices that equalled the hoarſe thunder, one of the gentlemen whiſpered another—'Let's 'roaſt the parſon;' to which his neighbour replied, ſealing his approbation with an oath—'I will begin to run the rig on 'him.' And accordingly much impertinence was applied to Mr. South by way of wit, which he received with great inſenſibility, only giving them two or three very cutting anſwers in return; but

but his wit being too refined, and too juſt to be comprehended by them, Mrs. Herner, who I began to perceive was more than commonly affected with Mr. South's merit, thought it time to retire, aſking him to drink tea with us. He readily conſented, and riſing from table with us, they cried out—'Fine parſon, 'efaith! Always ſtick by the women. 'Nay, thou haſt a good taſte; ſhe's 'worth a chace: but take care thee 'does not catch a tartar,' added Mr. Darking. Every one underſtood me to be the perſon hinted at in this ſpeech, which rendered me the more glad to leave theſe ungentleman-like gentlemen. As ſoon as we were out of the room, they ſet up another halloo, crying—'Clear! 'clear!' which informed us that they were not leſs rejoiced at our abſence, than we were at having got rid of ſuch irrational ſociety.

Mr. South told me that we had judged very well in retiring ſo ſoon; for the next ſtep towards driving us out of the room, would have been their entering into ſuch diſcourſe as no women of modeſty could without great impropriety ſit to hear. This greatly aſtoniſhed me: I did not ſuſpect any perſon of ſuch brutality. I thought politeneſs was not requiſite to teach people decency; common ſenſe alone, I imagined, might ſhew that it was brutal to ſay what any one ought not to hear. But more ſtill have I been ſince ſurprized at finding this vice, for I cannot give a breach of ſo amiable a virtue as modeſty a gentler name, was too common in circles that call themſelves polite; but ſurely without reaſon, ſince nothing can be ſo contrary to politeneſs as an offence againſt decency. Our viſitors did not leave us till the gentlemen were ſo far overpowered by the potency of Mrs. Herner's good October, that they were with difficulty ſet upon their horſes; but thoſe animals, much ſuperior to the brutes that rode them, conveyed their unworthy loads ſafe home.

Your ladyſhip, perhaps, by this time, may find it eaſy to be tired of ſuch company; therefore will not wonder if I did not wiſh them to repeat their viſits often, as, when they ceaſed to be new, they muſt become more dull than ſolitude.

After a month ſpent in this old caſtle, I began to grow impatient of confinement, and almoſt to deſpair of making my eſcape; but my uneaſineſs was ſtill greatly increaſed one morning, by Mrs. Herner's ſhewing me a letter from the marchioneſs; in which ſhe related to her, as ſhe termed, the happy conſequence of removing me out of Lord Dorcheſter's ſight. She there informed her, that he looked melancholy for a few days after my departure, but ſoon began by degrees to recover his gaiety, and with it his inclination towards her. Convinced by experience how little he liked reſerve in a woman he loved, ſhe had not endeavoured to conceal the ſentiments of her heart; and they ſo well agreed with his, that in a few days they were to be married, waiting only for the neceſſary preparations. She then proceeded to ſay, that ſhe was no longer under any uneaſineſs concerning me, a thouſand inſtances having aſſured her that Lord Dorcheſter was become totally indifferent towards my future fate, and had even expreſſed himſelf glad that he was delivered, he knew not how, of one who began to grow burdenſome to him. But yet, as ſhe pitied my youth, and was ſenſible how hard it muſt be for an unexperienced girl to reſiſt ſuch a man as Lord Dorcheſter, it grieved her heart, *too full of the milk of human-kindneſs*, to think I ſhould be left quite deſtitute of a ſubſiſtence; expoſed to the *wide world*, and all it's villainy, which might lead me into courſes that would prove the deſtruction of my *precious ſoul*. She therefore could not forbear giving way to the overflowings of her *humanity*, *generoſity*, and *compaſſion*, in offering me the ſame income which ſhe had tendered me before I left London, if I would bind myſelf, by a lawful contract, to relinquiſh it if I came within forty miles of London, or of his lordſhip's country-ſeat; for though ſhe was no longer jealous, yet ſhe could not bear to ſee Lord Dorcheſter's happineſs interrupted by the whining complaints or reproaches of a woman who would call herſelf ruined by him, though her own frailty was moſt in fault.

The ſhock this letter gave me was at firſt inexpreſſible; I could not ſupport the very ſound of Lord Dorcheſter's indifference. I knew not how to believe he was weary of me: I thought no one could diſſemble ſo well; for he had appeared more fond of me, more delighted with me than ever, but juſt before this cruel ſeparation. My mind was in too great an agitation to return Mrs. Herner any anſwer. She ſeemed to pity me, for my diſtreſs was very viſible; and would have

have beſtowed upon me a lecture on patience and reſignation, had ſhe been allowed the liberty of ſpeech; but, after a very eloquent beginning, ſhe was ſtopped ſhort by recollecting the marchioneſs's prohibition, and obſerved her compaſſion had led her into forgetfulneſs.

I was never ſo well pleaſed with Lady Trente's commands as on this occaſion. A perſon who is deeply afflicted can but ill bear the dull inſipid nonſenſe of an inſenſible preacher; when the heart ſpeaks loudly, who can liſten to a diſcourſe dictated by a cold imagination! I prevailed on Mrs. Herner to give me Lady Trente's letter; and after having renewed the firſt agonies of my grief by a ſecond peruſal, a plentiful flood of tears came to my relief, and ſo far quieted my mind, that I began to diſcover reaſons to ſuſpect the truth of this account. I was little diſpoſed to believe the marchioneſs was ſo very full of the *milk of human kindneſs* as ſhe pretended, or that one who had ſo little conſideration for the eaſe of my body, and the peace of my mind in this world, could have ſo tender a regard for my ſoul, and my happineſs in the next. The deſire of buying my abſence from Lord Dorcheſter was a ſuſpicious circumſtance; and I thought this all might be a fiction formed on a ſuppoſition that my aim was to marry my lord, and therefore I might the more readily comply with her propoſals, if I could be perſuaded all poſſibility of the completion of my hopes were at an end.

This ſcheme, like all others that are built on falſe foundations, could not anſwer the intent. My views were narrower and more humble. I thought not of marriage: to preſerve his friendſhip, and enjoy his converſation, was the utmoſt extent of my ambition; and this I flattered myſelf I might do ſhould another woman become his wife. But I muſt in ſincerity confeſs that the notion of his marrying was moſt tormenting to me. To be his friend, while no one had a ſtronger tie on his affections, ſatisfied my wiſhes; but if he had a wife, I was ſenſible I ought to reſign even the deſire of retaining the firſt place in his heart. This was a ſelf-denial that required a ſtronger mind, or weaker affection, than I poſſeſſed.

The declining ſtate of my health would have rendered me little able to ſupport the anxiety of my mind, had not the hopes I conceived that the whole was a fiction proved a moſt reviving cordial to my ſpirits. This reſtored me to life, though not to eaſe; but my fears and doubts made me more grieved than ever at my captivity; and, as my impatience for the means of eſcaping from this priſon was increaſed, it was mortifying to me to give an anſwer to the marchioneſs's propoſals, which would rather quicken than relax Mrs. Herner's watchfulneſs. This I knew muſt be the conſequence of a refuſal; but, obliged to declare myſelf, what could I do? My deſire of liberty inſpired me with courage enough to dare any thing but a violation of truth: there I was ſtill a coward; for I could not think myſelf juſtified in repelling wickedneſs by wickedneſs. The falſhood of others could not be a ſanction for it in me.

Mrs. Herner at laſt broke through her vow of ſilence, in order to uſe all the arguments her underſtanding could ſuggeſt, and her inclination ſtrengthen, to perſuade me to accept the conditions offered me. The gaoler, in this caſe, led as melancholy a life as the priſoner; and ſhe longed almoſt as much to be diſmiſſed from her charge, as I did to be out of her power. The poor woman was half dead of the vapours; and, I believe, would not have ſurvived it, had not Mr. South's company afforded her relief: for, whenever he appeared, ſhe was as happy as envy of the particular attention he paid to me could ſuffer her to be; and, though I would not, in general, recommend jealouſy as very conducive to mental or bodily health, yet it certainly would be of great ſervice in a ſituation that ſtagnates the blood, without ſome ſuch animating paſſion to continue it's circulation.

I could not but confeſs, it was pity that one who ſpoke ſo well ſhould ever ſpeak in vain: but what ſucceſs could attend it, had ſhe been endowed with the moſt perſuaſive eloquence? An orator places his hopes in moving our paſſions; and to make them of his party is his ſole aim: it is no affront, therefore, to her rhetorick, that it ſhould fail, when it was directed againſt the moſt invincible paſſion. After the good woman had talked herſelf hoarſe, I repeated what I had firſt told her, that no offers could tempt me to ſell Lord Dorcheſter's friendſhip; but, if I was permitted to judge for myſelf, and found him in reality as indifferent as the marchioneſs repreſented him, I ſhould fly far enough from one whoſe inconſtancy

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Plate I. Published as the Act directs by Harrison & Co. Aug. 20. 1785.

conſtancy muſt render the ſight of him painful, without putting her to any expence.

I thought her ladyſhip in a great error, when ſhe ſuppoſed poverty might prove ſo dangerous to the ſtate of my ſoul: I did not comprehend her meaning; and, as far as I had been able to obſerve, luxury led people into more vices than neceſſity. Experience had then ſhewn me, that—

'The devil grown wiſer than of yore,
'Tempts men by making rich, not poor.'

I was under no apprehenſion that want of virtue could be the conſequence of want of money; and therefore ſaw no ſufficient inducement to accept any from one who had ſo cruelly injured me.

CHAP. V.

MR. South had omitted writing to us for more days than uſual, having, as we learned, been prevented by a friend, who had ſpent a little time with him: but, during this increaſe of my anxiety, he came one morning to breakfaſt. His particular enquiries after my health ſhewed me that he perceived an alteration in it. The day being fine, we went together into the garden, where we had not walked long, when he intimated a deſire to ſpeak with Mrs. Herner alone. His countenance had ſhewn confuſion; his thoughts wandered; and his converſation had been ſtrained and unconnected from the time of his firſt coming in. I pitied him, from the belief that he laboured under ſome uneaſineſs; and pains of the mind could not then fail of exciting my compaſſion. I was now more convinced that he had ſome diſtreſs to impart; and, having heard him whiſper his requeſt for a private audience, I walked from them; and, thinking myſelf at a ſufficient diſtance, ſat down at the bottom of an old yew-tree, which time had rendered hollow, and frequently ſerved me for a well-ſheltered ſeat.

But, as the god of laughter would have it, Mrs. Herner brought her gentleman to a bench full in my view. I obſerved her eyes rather twinkling than ſparkling; every feature wore a ſmile; and ſhe had pulled up her head till ſhe was as upright as a May-pole.

After they were ſeated, and ſhe had bluſhed, drawn down her handkerchief, ſtroaked her ruffles, pinched her apron, and played over all the pretty airs of confuſion, finding he did not break ſilence, ſhe, as I could perceive, with great heſitation and difficulty, enquired his reaſon for deſiring this interview: her words were breathed in a voice too gentle for me to hear; but her manner explained them.

Mr. South did not ſeem to ſpeak with more facility, nor in a ſound more audible: I could not divine his meaning; but ſaw him confounded, and in a tremor; however, the firſt effort paſſed, he grew more eaſy; but, in proportion as his countenance expreſſed greater pleaſure, her's ſhewed leſs. His eyes petitioned; but, as his became more tender and humble, her's ſhot forth fiercer rays; her cheeks glowed with a higher red; and, loſing all that ſweet complacency of feature with which ſhe at firſt liſtened to him, ſhe roſe from her ſeat; and, anger giving ſtrength to her voice, I could very diſtinctly hear her thus addreſs him: 'Is this the mighty 'ſecret for which you wanted the private 'audience? You did well indeed, to de'ſire it in private: ſuch an abject thought 'ſhould be known by as few as poſſible. 'In love, in ſo ſhort a time! and with a 'baby face, a little white and red, and 'perhaps ſome pretty features! A child, 'not able to know the duties incumbent 'on a wife, and the miſtreſs of a houſe! 'To marry her would diſgrace your fa'mily, contaminate your profeſſion, diſ'honour your cloth, and bring certain 'ruin on yourſelf. Such wilful blind'neſs deſerves not a guide; but I will be 'one to you, and preſerve you from the 'perdition you court.' Mr. South interrupted her at this expreſſion of unwiſhed-for regard: I could not diſtinguiſh his words; but he had the air of a moſt melancholy and humble ſuppliant, which proved unavailing; for Mrs. Herner again broke forth—'Fye, fye! is it ſeemly 'for one whoſe example and preaching 'ſhould teach the world to mortify and 'deny themſelves, not to overcome their 'paſſions? Is it decent for ſuch a one, 'to chuſe a wife for a little tranſitory 'beauty? What will people ſay, when 'you are exhorting them to abſtinence; 'but, that after having provided every 'gratification for yourſelf; after, indeed, 'abſtaining from all that is leſs tempting, and thinking it virtue; you triumph over them who practiſe leſs ſelf-indulgence, though, perhaps, more lawfully? Does not your profeſſion teach

'you to search after more sublime beauties, those of the mind? Moral charms 'alone should be regarded by a minister 'of our sacred religion. Has not the 'wise Solomon told you, that *Favour 'is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but 'the woman that feareth the Lord, she 'shall be praised?* Does he not say, that *'The price of a virtuous woman is 'above rubies?* Such you might have found,' softening her voice: 'you 'might have met with women who have 'been tried in the world, like gold in the 'fire; and passed through it unsullied; 'whose minds are formed by a competence of years, and their hearts purified 'by knowledge and care; who have been 'taught, by experience, to value true 'merit;' (casting glances at him, which she designed should be languishing, but seemed more expressive of stupidity) 'one 'qualified to be friend, companion, helpmate; one who would nurse you when 'sick, obey you when well, and live up 'to a true sense of her duty; and all 'this with rank and family, that would 'not have debased you in the eyes of the 'world. This, I say, you might have 'found.' And here she stopped, as if to see whether a description she meant for her own picture would warm him to any kind thoughts of the original; but he, with some indignation in his countenance, answered—'I think I have found it all in 'your friend: I have too much faith in 'physiognomy to doubt it; her's expresses every thing that is amiable, in 'the most legible and charming characters.'—'I see what you are,' interrupted Mrs. Herner, with a voice still louder than before: 'the man gets the 'better of your divine soul. We may now 'no longer wonder, that the sheep wander out of the right path, since the shepherd himself goes astray: and, though 'obliged to purify human nature, is sinking to the brute; and not only withdrawing himself from his obedience to 'religion, but even to reason. While 'you are thus a slave to your appetites,' continued she, 'you are below the beasts 'of the field; and, as such, not fit company for me: but I shall take care to 'lead temptation out of your way, since 'you have not sufficiency of virtue to resist it. You shall no more see this 'painted baby, this fleshly idol, now the 'sole object of your devotion.' With this menace she left him; nor did he endeavour to detain her; but seemed all amazement.

I sat still, in hopes of remaining unobserved. I suspected myself to be meant under the flattering appellation of Painted Baby, that pernicious evil she had been describing; and had no desire to reverse her sentence, though I esteemed the man. But, passing by the place where I sat, he perceived me; and coming up, with great confusion in his manner, would have sat down by me. I had been detained there too long, from a desire of being concealed, and was grown very cold, therefore chose to walk. With great difficulty, he stammered out, he had been entreating Mrs. Herner to offer him and his fortune to me. He feared I should accuse him of presumption, if he attempted to make so poor an offering without the mediation of a friend; but she had reduced him to it, for he had no hopes of her assistance. He then gave me an exact account of his fortune and income, saying every thing that was tender, generous, and delicate, on the subject, with such fear and humility, that I was grieved at being obliged to humble him still more by a refusal, which, however, I endeavoured to palliate as much as possible. I acknowledged the obligation his good opinion conferred on me; assuring him of my esteem; but, that I could not think of marriage. Were not this a literal truth, he might be sure I should not except to his offer; for my situation was extremely unhappy; but I could not change it for the married state, though I was there a prisoner, most unjustly seized by force, and detained against my will with the utmost vigilance and care.

While I was uttering these last words, Mrs. Herner appeared; and, with a degree of rage not natural to her disposition, (but jealousy can work wonders) enquired, what I meant by remaining in the garden, commanding me to go into the house. I was so shocked with the concern I had given Mr. South, which he seemed rather to endeavour to conceal than to shew, that I was glad to obey her; but he, catching hold of my hand, entreated me to finish what I was saying, and explain a mystery which filled him with astonishment. I easily understood, that by this he meant the imprisonment I had slightly touched upon; but I could not make a further explanation before Mrs. Herner; nor did she give me time, for telling him it was unbecoming a minister of the gospel to give way to his passions, she led me into the house, out of which I was not suffered to stir that day.

Mrs.

Mrs. Herner had never beheld me with ſuch looks of anger as ſhe gave me after this affair. She was frequently in tears, and made me partake of her ſorrow, by being the victim of her ill-humour. Her jealouſy added ſo much to the cruel effects of the marchioneſs's commands, that I was ſo ſtrictly watched, (at a time when I more than ever longed for liberty, in order to examine into the truth of Lady Trente's letter) that three days paſſed before the gardener, who had been bribed into Mr. South's intereſt, could give me the following letter.

'MADAM,

'THOUGH you deny me the hopes 'of reward, you have not deprived 'me of all pleaſure; ſince you cannot 'be ſo cruel as to refuſe me that of attempting to reſcue you. To know 'that you are detained by force, is ſufficient to excite my endeavours to deliver you from your impriſonment; 'and happy ſhall I eſteem myſelf, if in 'this I can ſucceed, though it be attended with the greateſt misfortune to 'myſelf, the never ſeeing you again. As ſoon as you are in ſafety, I will implicitly obey your commands, even though they ſhould require me to leave you for ever; more bleſſed with the pleaſing recollection of having contributed to your happineſs, than any thing but your hand can make me; in your refuſing which, I have not a pretence to accuſe you of cruelty: it is but juſtice, ſince I can plead no other recommendation to your favour than the neceſſary conſequence of knowing you, and the being, with the ſincereſt reſpect, and warmeſt affection and admiration, your moſt devoted, obedient ſervant,

'HENRY SOUTH.'

This letter, at the ſame time, afforded me pleaſure and uneaſineſs. I had been obſerving all the ſervants, in order to find out among them an eye of pity and humanity for one diſtreſſed, as they muſt perceive me to be, in hopes of contriving my eſcape by their aſſiſtance, could I prevail on them to give me ſuch eſſential proofs of their compaſſion. This event ſhewed me, that the gardener, who was the laſt in my thoughts, muſt be the foundation of my ſcheme. I had little reaſon to ſuppoſe he thought of me; but the office he had undertaken for Mr. South, proved he was acceſſible in ſome avenues to his heart; and, from what I had learned by converſation, I imagined avarice to be the quality moſt likely to ſtand my friend. To this, therefore, I reſolved to have recourſe; and fortunately was provided with a ſum ſufficient to gratify ſuch a motive, in one whoſe terms were not very high.

But ſtill I had many difficulties to encounter. I could not recompenſe him for the loſs of his place, which muſt prove the conſequence of being known to have aſſiſted me in my eſcape; and yet, where to go without a guide, if I got clear from the caſtle, I knew not. Theſe conſiderations diſtreſſed me. They might have been obviated by putting myſelf under Mr. South's protection; but how could I make a man of his worth ſubſervient to my intereſt, and diſappoint him of the reward which no generoſity could prevent his hoping from ſuch a ſervice, though it might not ſuffer him to preſs what he would think, in gratitude, his due! I could not procure my own gratification but by his diſappointment; and my firſt reſolution was to write him an anſwer, which I will, as nearly as my memory will permit, repeat to your ladyſhip.

'HOW ardently ſoever I may wiſh for 'liberty, I cannot conſent to receive 'it from one to whom I can make no 'return. No captivity can be ſo grievous 'to me as the ſenſe of obligations which 'it will never be in my power to repay. 'I muſt intreat you not to deliver me 'from my impriſonment, to fetter me 'with ingratitude; nor to add any farther proofs of a regard I ſo little deſerve. Your generous and kind intentions can never be effaced from my 'memory; nor can I ever ceaſe to wiſh 'your happineſs and proſperity may be 'equal to your merit, and the juſt ſenſe 'I have of it. I can never give you a 'right to expect a heart which is not in 'my own power to give, and to which 'your merits alone are too good a title.'

When I delivered this epiſtle to the gardener, he informed me that Mr. South had made ſeveral unſucceſsful attempts to ſee me; and finding them vain, had applied to him to deliver me his letter, adding many other things in order to move my compaſſion, by the uneaſineſs under which he repreſented him, or to

pleaſe me by deſcribing ſymptoms of an affection in Mr. South, which, from my readineſs to enter into a correſpondence, I ſuppoſe he thought very agreeable to me.

I liſtened patiently, for fear of offending a man from whom I hoped to receive the bleſſing of liberty; but did not dare to venture a hint of my deſign at that time, leſt it ſhould be delivered to Mr. South with my letter, and I be obliged to him, contrary to my inclination.

I had the good fortune to meet with the gardener alone the next day. He told me he had given my epiſtle to Mr. South, who ſeemed ſo ſorry, poor gentleman, it grieved his heart to ſee him. Time was too precious for me to ſuffer him to ſpend it in expreſſing his compaſſion; I therefore offered the bribe I intended, and promiſed ſecreſy and prudence.

The man ſeemed ſtrongly charmed with the ſight of the gold, which I expoſed to his view, in order to ſtrengthen the temptation; and engaged to anſwer my hopes, if it could be contrived without his being diſcovered as a party in it, and aſſured me of uſing his utmoſt endeavour to effect it. We agreed on an hour of meeting again, when he ſhould be able to impart his ſucceſs. I charged him to keep the affair a ſecret from Mr. South; and we parted with a great increaſe of content on both ſides, he enjoying, in imagination, the offered gold, and I my liberty.

CHAP. VI.

MRS. Herner's vigilance would not ſuffer me to hear the gardener's ſucceſs at the time appointed; but I was too induſtrious in ſeeking an opportunity of ſpeaking, to be long prevented; and I had the inexpreſſible joy to learn that he had formed a practicable ſcheme. I liſtened with eagerneſs to every particular; but when I found my firſt ſtep was to be on a ladder, I confeſs I trembled. As the doors were almoſt ſecurely locked every night, he told me, he ſaw no hope of my eſcaping that way; and, the rooms being very high, I was raiſed ſo far from the ground, (though I lay only on the firſt floor) that he had no ladder that would reach above half way to my window. This induced him to aſſociate a young carpenter in the execution of his ſcheme, whom he found as ſenſible of the charms of gold as himſelf. They agreed to join two of their longeſt ladders together, and, through favour of the night, place them at my window; from whence I was to deſcend into the garden. The ſame means were to be uſed to convey me and themſelves over the garden-wall, the key of the garden being delivered every night to Mrs. Herner. Horſes were to be ready in waiting; and the young carpenter was to be my conductor till I arrived at a town where I could procure an eaſier way of travelling.

The gardener had in charge, after having conveyed the ladders over the wall, to carry them into the carpenter's-ſhop; there to diſunite them, to avoid ſuſpicion if a ſearch was made; and then returning over the part of the wall which ſome private excurſions had taught him to climb, he could go into his own bed-chamber, without any impediment, as the windows of it opened into the garden, and it was on the ground-floor.

This ſcheme, he aſſured me, nothing could fruſtrate but a noiſe being made in the execution of it, which muſt alarm the family.

I thought they ſhewed more care of themſelves than of me. To deſcend from ſo great a height down a pieced ladder, in a dark night, appeared very terrible in my eyes; and riding on horſeback, a thing I had never attempted, and that too in darkneſs, was not leſs dreadful: but my deſire of liberty was ſo ſtrong, that it overcame my fears; and I punctually obſerved all their directions. The appointed hour found me watching at my window: my guide was punctual; and with trembling ſteps I left a place I deteſted. But my joy was greatly clouded with fear; till, after riding the whole night, at break of day I arrived at a town, where I was informed I might get more ſuitable means of conveyance. The night had favoured my project no other way than wrapping all nature in darkneſs, and all the inhabitants of our caſtle in ſleep; for the rains beat, and the winds blew; and when I got to the inn I was entirely wet through my cloaths, my body periſhing with cold, and my heart chilled with fear. My guide had lent me a great-coat; but the rain had penetrated that long before we arrived at our journey's end; and it became only an additional fatigue to me, by the great weight it acquired from the rain it had imbibed.

In

In this condition I would have proceeded on my journey, though I was almoſt dead, had not the landlady inſiſted on my going to bed, to receive ſome refreſhment from the two things I wanted, warmth and reſt. I was as little able to contend with her advice as to purſue my own intention; and through weakneſs, more than inclination, obeyed. Before I retired to my room, I would have diſmiſſed the young carpenter; but he poſitively refuſed to leave the place till he had ſeen how I did after my reſt. This humane attention ſurprized me, in one to whom I was a ſtranger, as I had not met with the like from people who had more reaſon to regard me; and I could not but feel myſelf obliged to him for this action, though I was afraid he might open his heart with the liquor the inn afforded, and betray the whole affair. I did not fear it ſhould be by that means fruſtrated; but I could not like to be the ſubject of diſcourſe among ſuch a ſet of people.

Theſe thoughts, however, could not diſturb the reſt I ſo much wanted; and, after a ſleep of ſome hours, I awaked greatly refreſhed, and determined to proſecute my journey directly. While the chariot was getting ready, breakfaſt was brought me; and with it came my guide, to enquire after my health. I thanked him for his good-natured concern, and expreſſed a fear that I had inconveniently detained him from his buſineſs; but he aſſured me that was of no conſequence: adding—'I durſt not, for my life, my 'lady, have left you, till I could give a '*betterer* account to Mr. South. Alack, 'I warrant he will be main glad to hear 'you ſet out from the houſe ſo pure '*boddy* and *ſprack!* He will have fret-'ted *hugeouſly* at the night's being ſo 'bad; for he was ſo *timberſome* about 'your being cold, that he made me take 'his warmeſt great-coat for to put about 'you.'

Surprized at this addreſs, I enquired what he meant by Mr. South. I apprehended he knew nothing of my flight

'Ah, Lard! do you think naw,' continued the carpenter, 'our ſilly heads could have fancied this fine plot our ownſelves? No, no! Maſter Gardener, knowing Mr. Parſon to be your ſweetheart, went and told him what you had ſaid to un, and, *as how* you had ordered that he ſhould no tbe telled of it. 'Mr. Parſon bid un not ſay nothing of 'having ſet un into his *conferdence*; 'and having ſent for me, and tried as 'whether I was willing to act my part, 'what do he do but write us the plot 'down; come to my houſe and ſee that 'I had faſtened the ladders tightly to-'gether, that they might not throw you 'a fall; lent me his own horſe, becauſe 'it is a quiet and as ſure-footed as one of 'us Chriſtians; and then gave me this 'letter for you. My mind gives me that 'this will tell you all: but I does love 'to tell news; ſo I was bent on telling 'you all myſelf.'

I opened the letter with a mixture of curioſity and uneaſineſs. It contained but few lines; which were to acquaint me, that, to prove he deſerved a better opinion than I entertained of him, when I imagined he would want a reward for any ſervice he could render me, he had done every thing in his power to favour my eſcape, and would have guarded me in it, had not my charge of ſecreſy to the agent I had choſen, as well as my letter to him, plainly ſhewn that his preſence and aſſiſtance would be highly diſagreeable to me; that he wiſhed he could have contrived to have ſet me at liberty with more eaſe to myſelf, but hoped ſucceſs would amply recompenſe me for every difficulty. He ended by the warmeſt wiſhes of happineſs; adding, that he would not aſk for leave to be a ſpectator of it, by begging permiſſion to wait on me in London, fearing that I was ſo averſe to him, that he could not enjoy that pleaſure without it's being painful to me; and he would rather ſuffer the moſt ſenſible affliction all his life than give me an hour's diſquiet; nor was he worthy to know the occaſion of my being confined in that old manſion; and, indeed, he ſhould be afraid to learn it, was not his deſpair already arrived to the utmoſt exceſs.

I ſhould have thought myſelf inexcuſably ungrateful, had I not written a few lines to return my thanks for his generous aſſiſtance; to which I added an aſſurance, that I ſhould be always glad to ſee him, whenever his affairs would permit his coming to London: but, through inadvertency, forgot to give him a direction which might enable him to find me. With this letter I diſpatched my guide, and got into the chariot.

Though my ſituation was eaſier than before,

before, yet my mind was far from enjoying peace: every ſtep that brought me nearer London increaſed my anxiety. I trembled to enquire what I wanted to know; and the mere poſſibility of finding the marchioneſs's account true, (for I often flattered myſelf that it could ſcarcely be called a probability) made me wretched. The only ſource from which I hoped to receive any conſolation was returning to my kind aunt and her peaceful cottage: her wiſe inſtructions, and tender indulgence, I hoped, might in time heal my mind, and reſtore me to ſomething like tranquillity; for real peace, I believed, would never more enter my heart, ſhould this fatal change prove real. If indifference were to incline Lord Dorcheſter to avoid me, yet juſtice, I thought, muſt lead him to inform me in what part of the kingdom my aunt inhabited, a circumſtance he had hitherto kept from my knowledge. Theſe were the reflections of my moſt melancholy hours, which grew more frequent as I approached the place where I had ſo ardently longed to be. My apprehenſions increaſed ſo faſt, that fair Hope could ſcarcely find time to ſmile on my black imaginations.

Between this anxiety of mind, and the fatigue of my journey, I was not half animated when I got into town: but as I could not forego my impatient deſire to ſee Lord Dorcheſter while a ſpark of life remained, I ordered to be driven to his houſe; and made the coachman let me out before the ſervant (in leſs haſte than I was) came to the door, and I was ready to enter as ſoon as it was opened.

I enquired for Lord Dorcheſter with an eager wildneſs, which I ſaw ſurprized them. One anſwered he was not at home; while another went into the parlour, and, I could hear, pronounced my name. My lord's voice ſoon informed me that it was to him he ſpoke; for he, riſing ſuddenly from his ſeat, as I could plainly diſtinguiſh, cried out—'Good 'God! is it poſſible! Where is ſhe?' But, with a lower voice, added—'Why 'ſhould I aſk where ſhe is? I can never 'ſee her more! Keep her from me, and 'bid her avoid the man whom ſhe has ſo 'cruelly injured, and fear the effects of 'his reſentment!'

As ſoon as he ſpoke, I exclaimed, with the eagerneſs of diſtraction—'I hear, I 'hear his voice! Why do you refuſe to 'let me ſee him?' And endeavoured to force my way into the room where he was; but the ſervants ſtopped me, and held me faſt. This was not long neceſſary; for his words more effectually deprived me of the power of motion, and for ſome time afforded me relief, by reducing me to almoſt a total inſenſibility.

When I recovered my ſcattered thoughts, I deſired to have a chair called. The ſervants unwillingly obeyed me, being moved with the condition I was in: they would have perſuaded me to wait a farther recovery; and when they found all they could ſay was unavailing, each entreated me to permit him to ſee me ſafe home; but I equally rejected them all, charging them not to offend, on my account, ſo good a maſter, who, it was plain, would be diſpleaſed with any regard ſhewn to one whom he was determined to abandon. They inſiſted, that they were ſure he could not be angry at the reſpect and concern which they muſt be brutes not to feel for me, whatſoever he might think proper to do himſelf! But I would not ſuffer any of them to attend me; though, I confeſs, I received ſome ſatisfaction from ſeeing they retained a regard for me, independent of their maſter's. Gratitude will give us pleaſure, whatever heart pays us that valuable tribute.

CHAP. VII.

I Directed my chair to Lady Paleſtine's, from whom I hoped to learn the whole of the affair between Lady Trente and Lord Dorcheſter, which, from his behaviour, I more than ever believed: but pride would not ſuffer me to aſk any queſtions of his ſervants, though in ſuch particulars they are generally well qualified to give information.

At Lady Paleſtine's I was told ſhe was not at home. I knew ſhe never went abroad at that hour; and, being well acquainted with the faſhionable paradox of a lady's being abroad when ſhe is at home, I replied, that I was ſure ſhe was denied; and therefore deſired the ſervant would return and tell her my name. He complied; but brought me back word that my name could be no recommendation to me while my conduct was ſo indiſcreet.

Rejected a ſecond time, I had not cour-

age

rage to go to any other of my acquaintance, eſpecially as her ladyſhip was the only one with whom I was on an intimate footing; but ordered to be carried to my own houſe, where I hoped to be ſcreened from ſuch indignities, and perhaps to get ſome light into this undeſerved ill treatment; for ſuch, I thought, I had a right to call theſe affronts, ſince indifference could not excuſe brutality; nor did I ſuppoſe that my forced abſence could be attributed to my diſhonour. I was inſenſible to the ſuſpicious air it bore, and thought it ſhould have excited pity, not reſentment, in the hearts of thoſe that loved me. I imagined they might be apprehenſive for my ſafety, and pity my fate, but not blame my conduct. Since I became better acquainted with the world, I have been ſenſible that they could not be called unjuſt in the ill opinion they had conceived of me, though they proved in an error. When people can judge only by appearances, a miſtake may often be unfortunate, without being blameable.

But as, at that time, my ignorance prevented my looking on the treatment I received in this light, I was not free from reſentment, eſpecially againſt Lady Paleſtine: ſhe had hurt my pride; my lord had wounded me in my affections; and grief did not leave me ſpirit enough to be angry with him. It was not in the power of any other perſon to afflict me; for *where the greater malady is fixed, the leſſer is ſcarce felt.* My mind was ſo little capable of any increaſe of unaſineſs, that it received no addition from finding myſelf excluded even from my own houſe. The chairmen knocked a conſiderable time at the door, till they were convinced nobody was at home, and aſked me where I choſe to be carried.

This queſtion, indeed, puzzled me, though it could not add to my diſtreſs. I was afraid of attempting to get admittance into any other place, leſt it ſhould be refuſed me; and being little able to think, was long ſat down there, before I could recollect a houſe where I might hope to be received. At laſt, I thought of a milliner whom I had uſed, and directed them there.

This woman very readily accommodated me with a room, and would have favoured me with her company, had I not entreated her to leave me to myſelf; for, in ſuch a ſtate of mind, the ſight of any perſon was irkſome: it muſt have laid me under ſome reſtraint; for my pride would not ſuffer me to declare that I could be ſo much affected by one who felt nothing for me but indifference; and I was afraid of mentioning Lady Paleſtine's behaviour, ſince her ſcorn might prove an example to the milliner; for the little love to ape the great. It was not till the next day that I became able to reſolve or execute any thing. I then determined to write to Lord Dorcheſter; juſtifying this courſe from all imputation of meanneſs, by perſuading myſelf, that to ſhew I was blameleſs was a duty I owed to my reputation. Inconſtancy appeared to me the more criminal, from my having no idea of it. I ſuppoſed it a crime almoſt unparalleled, and knew not that cuſtom was thought ſo great an alleviation of the offence, that it was treated by the world as one of the ſmalleſt frailties to which human nature is ſubject. Your ladyſhip will, therefore, not wonder if ſome reſentment was mixed with grief. But I found it eaſier to humble my pride than to mortify my affection.

Had I perceived that appearances were againſt me, I ſhould have thought myſelf obliged to make all the ſubmiſſions which could have been required of me, if I had been really in the wrong; for who can be ſecured in ſuch caſes from miſtaking the truth? But, without this excuſe for my condeſcenſion, I wrote to my lord a ſhort account of my impriſonment; adding, that I hoped he would not partake of the marchioneſs's averſion to me; and he might be aſſured that I ſhould not return even an unfriendly wiſh for the injuries I had received from her; for whoever was his wife, I muſt look on her with reſpect, and, if ſhe pleaſed, with affection; and, indeed, if ſhe made him happy, muſt feel that gratitude towards her which a perſon deſerves who confers upon us the great bleſſings in life: for in that rank I ſhould always eſteem his happineſs, however his heart was eſtranged from me. I then begged, if he no longer wiſhed to ſee me, he would inſtruct me where to find my former ſolitude, and not detain me in a place which was become much more lonely to me than my cottage.

I forbore, as much as I was able, any ſtrong expreſſions of my grief: if his affection was gone, I did not wiſh to

move

move his pity; and my concern was too tender to ſuffer me to make him any reproaches.

As ſoon as I had written my letter, I ſent it by one of the chairmen who had brought me to the milliner's. This man, either moved with compaſſion for one he ſaw ſo deeply afflicted, at an age when grief might reaſonably have been thought far off, or actuated by the leſs laudable motive of hoping to find advantage from attending on a perſon whoſe affairs appeared ſo confuſed and complicated that a menial aſſiſtant might be requiſite, came early in the morning to aſk if I had any commands. Whatever was his motive, the effect was convenient. I wanted a meſſenger, and gladly employed him. His ſagacity convinced him that my letter was of importance to me; and, without my ſaying any thing to that purpoſe, aſſured me he would return with the utmoſt expedition.

I believe the chairman kept his word; but, to impatient expectation, time ſeems to move with leaden pace. The hour-glaſs empties ſlowly to thoſe who watch every ſand that falls through it. This was the caſe with me; the fleeteſt of the creation, had he been my meſſenger, would have appeared ſlow to my impatience. From the inſtant the chairman left me, I expected his return; and would not believe my watch, it marked the progreſs of time ſo tediouſly in compariſon of my ſwift imagination. After what I thought a long abſence, the man came back. I had ſcarce courage to aſk the ſucceſs of my letter, and was damped by ſeeing none in his hand: but, calling all my fortitude to my aid, I ſtuttered out ſomething like an enquiry; to which he replied, Lord Dorcheſter was at home, and the ſervant carried in my letter; but returned immediately with it in his hand, ſaying his lord refuſed to receive it, and commanded him never to bring any more meſſages or letters from me, unleſs he wanted to incur his diſpleaſure, and entirely deſtroy all hopes of his recovery of health or eaſe. With this anſwer the chairman was returning; when the ſervant overtook him, deſired the letter, and that he would acquaint him where I was to be found; bidding him preſent his duty to me, and aſſure me that he would make farther trials to bring me an anſwer; and, if he could not ſucceed, I ſhould receive my own letter ſafe, with an account how he had proceeded.

Nothing could be more ſhocking to me than to find my lord would not even read my juſtification. Indifference alone could make him void of all curioſity about me; therefore I had little hope from his ſervant's good-natured intention. I knew if the ſight of his hand had not diſpelled any pique I had conceived againſt him, the ſtrongeſt arguments from another muſt have been unavailing: I ſhould have diſcovered more eloquence in the leaſt ſignificant letter of the alphabet written by him, than in all the words another tongue could have uttered. Had I entertained the leaſt hope of ſucceeding by his ſervant's interceſſion, my pride was too much humbled to have felt any mortification at being reduced to make uſe of ſuch an interceſſor; but I confeſs I bluſhed to think how low I was fallen. I now ſtrongly experienced this infallible truth—

'She muſt be humble who would pleaſe,
'And ſhe muſt ſuffer who would love.'

And yet I continued blind to my own paſſion; I ſuſpected myſelf of no tenderer affection than friendſhip, of which I had ſo high an idea, that I readily reconciled every pang I endured to my exalted notion of it. If I compared the ſentiments of my heart with what was generally called friendſhip in the world, it only ſerved to make me deſpiſe what others profeſſed, not to ſuſpect my own: a common effect of a compariſon between ourſelves and others. Any difference that appears to our own opinion, generally turns to our advantage, and gives us opportunity of beſtowing ſome ſelf-applauſe upon our own perfections.

CHAP. VIII.

I Had been for ſome hours devoted to deſpair, when I beheld Lord Dorcheſter before me. I was ſo buried in thought, that I had not heard the door open; but the ſight of him put all my reverie to flight. He eagerly embraced me, and thanked Heaven he once more had me in his arms. Sudden joy overcame me, and deprived me of the power of ſpeech. During my ſilence, he begged pardon for his inſolence in refuſing to ſee me; but that, convinced I had voluntarily fled from him, he thought it mean, as well as imprudent, to truſt his

ſelf with the ſight of one from whom he was endeavouring to wean his affections; a painful trial which had coſt him many pangs, and yet proved totally unſucceſsful. The ſame motive, he ſaid, induced him to refuſe my letter; which he confeſſed he repented the next minute, and ſhould have called back my meſſenger, had he not been reſtrained by the fear of expoſing himſelf to his ſervants, and being deſpiſed for his meanneſs. This conſideration prevented his aſking any more queſtions concerning me the day before; but he could no longer maintain the ſame command over himſelf, and on ſome other pretence calling the ſervant who had brought him my letter, he enquired what meſſenger I had employed.

This gave the good-natured footman an opportunity of deſcribing the condition into which I was thrown by his refuſing to ſee me, and all that paſſed on the occaſion. Seeing his lord moved by the account he gave him, he ventured to expreſs his wonder at his lordſhip's having rejected my letter; for he was ſure I could not be in the wrong, ſince it was plain to perceive that I did not expect ſuch treatment as I had received the day before; and had none of that confuſion in my countenance ſo impoſſible to be hid by one who fears the reproaches of a perſon ſhe has injured. Lord Dorcheſter, without ſeeming offended at the liberty he took, replied, that if he had ſuppoſed Miſs Lenox could have juſtified herſelf, he would at leaſt have read her letter; and, indeed, could not but accuſe himſelf of great inſolence in having refuſed to ſee her when ſhe had favoured him with a viſit, or to receive what ſhe had done him the honour to write, but that anger had got the better of the reſpect due to her.

The ſervant, not perceiving that pride might be his lord's ſtrongeſt motive for retaining ſome appearance of regard for one whom he had taught every perſon belonging to him to reſpect, was encouraged by the manner in which he ſpoke of me, and told him the chairman had left my letter, therefore the means of repairing what he thought an offence was ſtill in his power. Obſerving that he looked rather diſconcerted than angry, he brought it, and laying it on the table before him, went out of the room, while my lord continued in an anxious uncertainty what courſe to take. He owned that, had his ſervant ſtaid, he could not have prevailed on himſelf immediately to have opened the letter, ſo ſtrong was pride and reſentment; but when he found himſelf alone, every other conſideration vaniſhed before his hope, weak as it was, of ſeeing me juſtified by my defence. 'But,' continued he, 'when I 'had read your letter, the affliction ex-'preſſed in it, untinctured either with 'reſentment for the inconſtancy of which 'you ſuſpected me, or the meanneſs of 'one who cannot feel an injury, and the 'cruel treatment you had received on my 'account, as I gathered from the circum-'ſtances you related, gave me the ten-'dereſt concern, at the ſame time that it 'relieved me from a ſtate of miſery to 'inſpire me with the moſt lively joy. I 'could not reſtrain my impatience, but 'inſtantly repaired to your houſe, with 'ſuch haſte and eagerneſs in my ſteps and 'countenance, as attracted the attention 'of every one that met me. I perceived 'it plainly, but could not command ei-'ther, nor on ſuch an occaſion beſtow a 'thought on the opinion of the multi-'tude. But when I hoped to receive 'the reward of my haſte by the ſight 'of you, I learnt that you were not there, 'nor could your ſervants give me any 'further information, than that a neigh-'bour told them a chair had ſtopped a 'conſiderable time at your door the day 'before, and finding no one at home, at 'laſt went away. I reproved them for 'their negligence in leaving the houſe 'empty, with more warmth and bitter-'neſs than I believe any of my depend-'ents ever ſaw me uſe; and now had no 'chance of finding you, but in the poſ-'ſibility of my people's having learnt 'where you were. In order to make 'this enquiry, I returned home with as 'much ſpeed as I had left it, and had 'the ſatisfaction of hearing where you 'lodged. Add to this, my joy in find-'ing you, my deareſt Ophelia, the de-'light of knowing you think me wor-'thy of pardon. Relate to me every 'circumſtance of what has befallen you. 'Compleat my felicity by giving me 'hopes you ſtill retain an affection for 'me; or, if you do not, forbear to tell it 'me: deceive me into happineſs, and 'hypocriſy will for once be a virtue.'— 'Alas!' I replied, 'I never had leſs oc-'caſion to act the hypocrite, if this is all 'you require. Though I have thought 'your treatment of me cruel, I could 'not reſent it. My heart was too much

'yours to be angry; it could only 'grieve. But ſurely it was a melan-'choly recompence for all the pain I 'had ſuffered by my abſence from you.'

Lord Dorcheſter uſed all his power to ſoothe me; and, in juſtification of what he had done, informed me that Lady Trente wrote him a letter the day after my being carried off, to inform him that ſhe had overheard Miſs Lenox concerting with a young gentleman the night before the means of running away with him, and conſidering all the precautions neceſſary towards concealing him from his lordſhip's reſentment, and her from his ſearch. That ſhe did not hear of the day that was agreed upon, therefore thought ſhe could not too ſoon give this information, as there ſeldom paſſed much time between the forming ſuch ſchemes and the execution of them; and knowing none of my friends but his lordſhip, ſhe believed herſelf obliged in mere charity to acquaint him with it, as it might give him the power of preventing the young lady's ruin.

This ingenious epiſtle found Lord Dorcheſter in the utmoſt anxiety; and the agreement it bore to my diſappearing, perſuaded him of the truth of it. A propheteſs who could fulfil her own predictions, would be very injudicious if the fact did not correſpond with her words. He went directly to her houſe to enquire more particularly into the affair, which ſhe confirmed to him by many corroborating circumſtances of her own invention, and expreſſed herſelf vaſtly concerned that ſhe did not apprehend how ſoon it was to be executed, ſince it might poſſibly have been prevented, if ſhe had acquainted him with it the inſtant ſhe overheard us. Lord Dorcheſter wanted to diſcover the gentleman, but ſhe would give no particular deſcription; telling him ſhe could not ſatisfy a curioſity which might endanger a life ſhe ſo highly valued, as ſhe feared he intended to call the perſon to account. Whenever he preſſed for this information, he could obtain nothing but expreſſions of her attachment to him, (of which, though not a vain man, he was not ignorant before) and invectives againſt my ill conduct, telling him it ſhould make him indifferent to my fate; for no more could be required of a guardian than a parent would perform; who on ſuch provocation muſt abandon their beſt-beloved child, and leave her to receive the puniſhment ſhe is juſtly deſerved.

Lady Trente procured many interviews with Lord Dorcheſter, by pretended informations that might aſſiſt him in finding me out; the only means ſhe could diſcover of bringing him to her houſe, and therefore her working brain was continually employed in inventing them; and every time ſhe ſaw him, ſhe omitted no endeavours to attract him; but mixed ſo many bitter accuſations againſt me with the language her love dictated, that ſhe only encreaſed his diſlike to her. He thought the love could not be delicate or generous that took a pleaſure in giving pain to the object of it, whatever benefit ſhe might hope would thereby accrue to herſelf.

Having ſufficiently informed each other of all that had paſſed during our ſeparation, we ſpent the reſt of the evening in rejoicing at it's being at laſt ended; but my lord declared he ſhould never more think me ſafe out of his ſight, nor knew how he ſhould venture to leave me for an inſtant. There appeared an increaſe of tenderneſs in him which ſilenced all my repinings at what I had ſuffered. Some diſaſters give a reliſh to good fortune, and little reverſes quicken affection.

CHAP. IX.

I Did not return to my own houſe till the next morning. The hurry of my ſpirits had a good deal diſordered me; and as all places are agreeable to the happy, I choſe to remain that day at my lodgings: one great reaſon, I believe, might be an unwillingneſs to loſe any of my lord's company by the interruption we ſhould have received from removing my habitation.

My Lord Dorcheſter grew extremely uneaſy when he perceived that my ill ſtate of health was more laſting than my anxiety. We had both flattered ourſelves that happineſs would have cured me; but I believe my conſtitution had ſuffered as much from the unwholeſome ſituation of the marchioneſs's caſtle as from vexation, and therefore eaſe of mind was not ſufficient to recover me. He made me conſult a phyſician, who declared Tunbridge waters the moſt probable remedy; but as it was yet too early

in the year to drink them, he gave me ſome medicines for preſent relief, with but indifferent ſucceſs.

My lord determined to carry me to Tunbridge as ſoon as the ſeaſon would permit, and engaged Lady Paleſtine to be of the party, which I then looked upon as an obliging attention. Without any one to countenance and direct me, I muſt have been extremely at a loſs in a place ſo new to me; but I have ſince perceived his motive was to prevent my becoming intimate with any perſon who, not being ſo well inſtructed, might have fruſtrated his views.

In the interim, my lord's principal care was finding me out a variety of amuſements. I was carried to every place where there was any novelty that might divert me; but none made ſo great an impreſſion on me, as a collection of curioſities, and Bedlam, both of which I was ſhewn. I propoſed great pleaſure from the firſt, imagining I ſhould there ſee every thing that was uncommonly beautiful; and was greatly diſappointed to find that, on the contrary, the collector ſeemed to have been actuated by a pique at Nature; for if ſhe happened to ſwerve from her general laws, to contradict all order, beauty, and uſe, the miſhapen, uninformed maſs, became to him more valuable than her faireſt productions. He had ſpent his life in ſearch of things from which moſt people would have run away, and had cheriſhed what would have frighted others. I found he was the general parent of monſters, the grand nurſe of abortions, and equally the careful receiver of thoſe who were born dead or died of old age, declaring war with the earth, by defrauding it of it's due tribute, the bodies of the deceaſed. The latter, indeed, I was informed, had not been performed by his own art, he having robbed Egypt of half it's Ptolemies, and yet without a moral view in ſhewing how poor a load is the body of a king. One might ſay with Antony—

'Lie there, thou ſhadow of an emperor;
'The ground thou cover'ſt on thy mother Earth
'Is all thy empire now.'——

I was carried next to Bedlam, where I was ſurprized to find ſo few perſons confined in a place which I was told had been appropriated to the reception of ſuch as were deprived of their reaſon; for I myſelf had ſeen a ſufficient number to have filled it, whom I ſhould have judged well qualified.

It was ſtrange to me that no perſon ſhould be thought to deſerve confinement but he whoſe hurtful actions proceeded from miſtaken notions; while he who is prompted by *evil intentions*, who acts in open defiance of *religion*, *virtue*, and *reaſon*, and endeavours to form a happineſs for himſelf in deſtroying that of ſociety, ſhall be imitated by a few, approved by many, and tolerated by all. He ſhall be ſuffered to enjoy liberty who from a falſe pride reduces himſelf and family to beggary and ſhame; he who proſtitutes his principles, and tramples honeſty under foot, in order to gain honours, ſhall be received into ſociety; while the poor wretch who innocently fancies himſelf a king, ſhall be ſhut in a dark room, denied the light of the ſun, which graciouſly 'ſhines on the juſt and 'the unjuſt.'

I received great conſolation from ſeeing ſo much happineſs among a ſet who above all others ſeemed to claim our pity; and was glad to find that the lunaticks in Bedlam, as well as thoſe that live more at large, could ſay that 'there is a plea-'ſure in being mad, which none but 'madmen know;' and I am not ſure the former have not the larger ſhare of it. He who madly believes felicity to conſiſt in things which when attained would give him more pain than ſatisfaction; he who aims at impoſſibilities, and ſearches for what cannot be diſcovered; has juſt reaſon enough to feel diſappointment, but not to conquer the turn of mind which led him into the vain purſuit which occaſioned it.

On the contrary, in Bedlam the ambitious man is a king; and, with fancied majeſty, ſtruts as proudly in his wretched rags as if cloathed in coronation robes, and his head is as eaſy as if graced with a diadem. The miſer, in his dirty cell, believes himſelf poſſeſſed of mines of gold, and rejoices in his ſtore. The gay man enjoys imaginary pleaſure, and fancies variety, while his life paſſes in a dull ſameneſs day after day. The politician here beholds the ſucceſs of every ſcheme; he new-moulds the ſtate, wages bloody wars, effects the greateſt revolutions, and becomes the ruler of the world, without ſtirring out of his little cell. Here the author's imagination reconciles the two things he before found moſt irreconcileable, wit and riches; and, enrap-

tured, enjoys a conſciouſneſs of ſuperior genius. The vain woman, in ſpite of age or ſmall-pox, perceives an admirer in every one that beholds her; and the ſinical beau fancies finery in his filth. Where every thing is imaginary, the pride and vanity of the undertaker aſſures him of ſucceſs; nothing but reaſon will convince an obſtinate man that his genius can be conquered, and his well-laid ſcheme baffled.

I was not long permitted to enjoy the conſolation I received from finding that miſery was not always the portion of the mad; for we were ſoon carried to another part of the hoſpital, ſet aſide for thoſe who were afflicted with imaginary wretchedneſs. This, indeed, was a dreadful ſight; for though the cauſes were fantaſtick, the ſufferings were real. There was ſomething too ſhocking in this ſcene to tempt me to make a ſtay of many minutes in it. We left it as ſoon as we could; but yet I thought the leſſon it gave might not be uſeleſs to a mind capable of reflection. Should it not teach mankind to endeavour to bring their paſſions under the directions of reaſon? To fix their inconſtant minds, and expel every fantaſtick whim, leſt they ſhould gain ſtrength from time and encouragement, till they arrive at the dreadful exceſs of which Bedlam affords ſo many examples? If people once ſuffer themſelves to deviate from Reaſon's path, who can pretend to fix any certain bounds for their miſguided ſteps? and when the conſiſtency of action which ſhe ſhould conſtitute gives place to every whim of a capricious mind, it is wonderful that they ſhould wander on till they arrive at diſtraction. The pleaſures, honours, and misfortunes, of thoſe who are denominated rational beings, are generally imaginary; they frequently rejoice at what is no benefit, and grieve for what is no evil; they eagerly purſue trifles which are not worth a thought, and neglect matters of the higheſt importance: in ſhort, they will labour years to obtain pleaſures which laſt but a day; and, for a moment's gratification, will give up the happineſs which ſhall continue through all eternity.

I cannot help thinking your ladyſhip lulled into a ſweet ſlumber by my moralizing on this ſcene; but indeed you muſt excuſe me; for it made ſo deep an impreſſion on my mind, that I can never recollect it without falling back into the ſame train of reflections which I then made upon it, and for which a longer experience of the world has only ſerved to give me a greater ſcope. In conſideration of this indulgence,, I will promiſe, if poſſible, to avoid all ſuch offence for the future; and, the better to effect it, will carry your ladyſhip to a new place, paſſing over in ſilence the remainder of the time I ſpent in London; for, as it afforded little beſide matter for reflection on cuſtoms to which I was a ſtranger, I may be apt again to turn moralizer. I muſt depend on the actions of others for making my narration more agreeable to you than a long ſeries of my own thoughts, which are nothing but a compoſition of *witty* obſervations that would make any good-natured perſon weep the poverty of the imagination that gave riſe to them; *lively* remarks that would prove better ſoporificks than all the opium in Turkey; diſſertations, *moral*, *religious*, and *entertaining*; from which, after much yawning, you may learn that it is right to do right, and wrong to do wrong; that friendſhip is better than enmity, and that it is wiſer to pleaſe than to offend. Theſe great truths I ſhall leave to be taught by perſons who love ſporting on an old ſentiment in threadbare words, avoiding as much as I can the produce of my own brain, in hopes of affording you more entertainment by collecting exoticks, than from any plants that ariſe from ſo bad a ſoil as my imagination, which is not very fertile of anything but weeds.

I muſt not, however, omit one affair which was tranſacted before we left London. The Marchioneſs of Trente was ſo enraged at Mrs. Herner's having left me a poſſibility of eſcaping, by which her ſchemes were fruſtrated, and ſhe expoſed, that ſhe refuſed to ſee her at her return to London, where Mrs. Herner went as ſoon as ſhe found I was irrecoverably loſt. A more lamentable effect of the marchioneſs's diſpleaſure than the withdrawing the light of her countenance, was her refuſing to maintain her any longer, in which denial ſhe abuſed her in the moſt opprobrious terms that rage and inſolence could ſuggeſt. In this diſtreſs Mrs. Herner applied to many of her friends, but found that few people's compaſſion extended farther than words and condolances; as for more effectual

effectual conſolation, every one ſhifted her off to another, as more able to aſſiſt her. Like Gay's hare, ſhe received nothing but advice to apply to others; 'The 'ſheep's at hand, and wool is warm.' I ſuppoſe ſhe thought I might harbour ſome reſentment againſt her, in conſideration of the part ſhe had been employed to act towards me; at leaſt ſaw no reaſon to expect I ſhould do for her what thoſe who call themſelves her friends refuſed; ſo that I only heard by chance that ſhe and her niece had quarrelled, but the occaſion of it was unknown. Lord Dorcheſter had adviſed me to conceal the marchioneſs's behaviour towards me, and Mrs. Herner had not declared it, fearing to exaſperate her ſtill more.

Though I was as little diſpoſed to eſteem Mrs. Herner's diſpoſition as to be grateful for the office ſhe had undertaken, yet I could not be inſenſible to her diſtreſs. 'A brave man ſtruggling with 'the ſtorms of fate,' is the nobleſt work of God, and deſerves our admiration; but a mean man is ſtill his workmanſhip, and, when afflicted, demands our pity. I told my lord how much her misfortunes affected me; and the more, as I was, though not blameably, the occaſion of them. I found his heart was not leſs penetrable than mine; he compaſſionated her, and ſaid he could not bear that any one ſhould be made wretched by an event which reſtored his happineſs. He anſwered me, that I might be eaſy on her account, for he would take care ſhe ſhould have the means of being ſo; but thought it right that, if poſſible, they ſhould be procured from Lady Trente, who at leaſt deſerved that puniſhment.

Lord Dorcheſter accordingly went to the marchioneſs, and told her, that ſhe muſt know he was well acquainted with her treatment of me, and that ſhe might expect to have it made publick, and to become the topick of general diſcourſe, if ſhe would not agree to ſettle an independency on Mrs. Herner. Not that he was at all obliged to that lady's intentions, who had been a vigilant gaoler, but becauſe he pitied the woman. Lady Trente was ſhocked at ſeeing my lord; but this propoſal ſoon turned the bluſh of ſhame into the higher red of anger. He found her invincible ſpirit ſcarcely to be ſubdued by the pride of reputation. She would indeed, after a ſhort reſiſtance, have conſented to receive her aunt; but my lord had undertaken the poor woman's cauſe, and thought he ſhould but half relieve her diſtreſs, if he expoſed her to her niece's ill-uſage. He therefore inſiſted on a ſettlement of two hundred pounds per annum for her, finding no hopes of ſuch an allowance voluntarily, as he thought her relation to the marchioneſs, and her paſt merits, deſerved from her. At laſt he ſucceeded, got the ſettlement drawn up, and delivered it into the hands of the overjoyed Mrs. Herner.

CHAP. X.

LADY Paleſtine delayed our going to Tunbridge for more than a fortnight after Lord Dorcheſter wiſhed me there. He was deſirous of my drinking the waters as ſoon as the weather would permit; but her ladyſhip did not apprehend ſhe ſhould receive ſufficient pleaſure from watching my recovery, to reconcile her to the place while it continued empty. She did not give this as her reaſon for deferring her journey, but put it upon buſineſs, which, in a woman who had no buſineſs but pleaſure, told it as plainly, though more civilly, than if ſhe had ſaid it in expreſs terms. By this delay, the place was pretty full when we got thither. We arrived late at night; but the love of company determined Lady Paleſtine to appear the next morning; and ſhe inſiſted on my doing the ſame. I had been accuſtomed to evening crowds; but to be introduced into one ſo early in the day was quite new to me, and ſo little agreeable to me at a time when my health made me rather languid in a morning, that I wondered it ſhould ever be a practice among a ſociety of invalids.

The muſick which played while the company remained upon the walks pleaſed me; but I have laughed at myſelf ſince, for the reaſons I aſſigned for it. I imagined it was intended as a part of that courſe which was to reſtore the ſick to health; and medicinally deſigned to promote chearfulneſs, to remove the gloominеſs acquired in the night, enliven the languor of a ſick perſon's morning, to divert their thoughts from their infirmities, and give a turn to their ſpirits. Not contented with this reaſon alone, as ſome of the muſick ſeemed too loud for the trembling frame of an invalid, I ſuſpected it was alſo intended to drown the complaints of the ſick, as drums and trumpets are uſed in battle to prevent the

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groans of all the wounded from being heard by the reſt, who might be intimidated by them. Imagination often makes us attribute to deſign what is really the effect of chance—

'And learned commentators view,
'In Homer, more than Homer knew.'

But I am ſtill of opinion, that, though this may not be a reaſon for the muſick's playing, it is a good conſequence ariſing from it; for I obſerved, that if it ceaſed for a moment, I heard a hundred voices, too weak, indeed, to contend with the ſhrill violin, or the hoarſe violincello, uttering promiſcuouſly the words Jaundice, Palſy, Gout, Rheumatiſm, with the names of almoſt every other diſeaſe incident to human nature; with ſo minute a detail of the ſymptoms of each, as increaſed the evil in the ſufferer's imagination, and lowered the ſpirits of the hearer; and all in ſuch a confuſion of tongues, that it was impoſſible to appropriate to each their reſpective complaints; but ſerved to convince me, that all diſtempers were there aſſembled. This filled my mind with a kind of horror; and I was almoſt ready to believe I had made one in Holbein's Dance of Death.

I was for ſome time amuſed with the variety of characters this place afforded, and with the vanity and envy ſo apparent in many, which, I make no doubt, often delays the benefit that would otherwiſe be received from the waters. A pretty woman afflicted with the jaundice, whoſe ſpirits have been ſufficiently depreſſed with the cloud of yellow ſpread over her charms, has been ſeen to grow viſibly of a deeper dye by the perſecution of a rival beauty, who, to compleat the triumph of health and bloom, would always ſit next her. It was common to ſee a young lady with bright eyes, and reſplendent complexion, place herſelf cloſe by a pale and languid ſpectre, and with pleaſure conſidering the contraſt; or a giggling girl, crouding a dejected invalid, who might have ſat for the image of Patience on a monument.

The variety of behaviour in this various company was not leſs entertaining. I was often diverted with obſerving a meeting between a delicate town lady, and a robuſt northern laſs: the contempt in each of their countenances ſufficiently proved the ſelf-ſatisfaction of both. The eaſy aſſurance of a perſon much accuſtomed to company, and the timorous fyneſs of a country girl, who never before was five miles diſtant from the family manſion, makes no bad ſcene; the one advancing with intended affability, while the other, with innocent fear, retires from the forward thing, whom ſhe ſuſpects of ſome bad deſign.

When I had ſo often obſerved theſe movements of the mind, that they grew old to me, they ceaſed to entertain, and I became very much tired of the rooms, except on ball-nights. I loved dancing; and Lord Dorcheſter, or Lord Larborough, (who followed us down to Tunbridge) were my partners. I found more than ever the inconvenience of being the ſubject of obſervation. I could neither ſit nor walk in peace; every motion was conſtrained, by perceiving myſelf continually ſtared at. In a morning, indeed, I was leſs obſerved; ſick people have not then ſpirits enough to be impertinent: my lord ſaid I owed it to the paleneſs of my complexion; for ſickneſs had robbed me of my natural colour, though the heat of the room in an evening would, in a degree, reſtore it. Lady Paleſtine uſed to be out of patience with the uneaſineſs ſhe ſaw me under at being looked at; and would tell me ſhe never envied me ſo much: I have been ready to reply, that perhaps ſhe thought a very exact examination could diſcover only beauties in her, whereas I was fearful that ſuch ſtrict obſervation muſt rather enable them to perceive defects in me, which in a tranſient view might be overlooked.

I wiſhed myſelf leſs at leiſure to remark the actions of others, the impertinent effect of idleneſs; and, growing extremely tired of ſitting by a card-table, without having the leaſt knowledge of the game there played at, (which, however, ſo fixed Lord Dorcheſter and Lady Paleſtine's thoughts on their cards, that I had no converſation with them) I was tempted to try my fortune at a game at Chance, then much in faſhion. As no ſkill was required, I thought I might ſucceed as well as others. Fortune has been ſaid to favour fools; and at play I was an abſolute idiot; therefore had ſome reaſon to hope ſhe would prove propitious.

I went home the firſt night, winner of two or three guineas, and was very well entertained. Play, by keeping up an eager attention, amuſed me much; and ſoon awakened in me the ſpirit of a gameſter. I regularly attended the table every night,

night, but constantly with bad success. This did not discourage me; but, on the contrary, convinced my good luck was changed, I continued till I had not a shilling left; fully expecting that every stake would bring me back part of what I had lost. I was now in a disagreeable situation: I reproached myself for my folly; and, not being able to supply the expences of going abroad, was obliged to spend my evenings at home. This was not very easy; for Lady Palestine loved no place that was not crouded, and my lord was engaged in a party which he knew not how to leave. I was obliged, therefore, to practise a constant resistance to the pressing instances they continually made me to accompany them. It was with regret I did what seemed so very obstinate and disobliging, as to persist in saying I did not chuse to go when they so earnestly entreated it; but I was too much ashamed of my folly, to own my reason; besides, that it would have been making my lord pay for it instead of myself. To be so long deprived of his presence, was very painful to me: if I had gone to the rooms, there were times when he was not fixed to a card-table, and then I used to enjoy his conversation; but now I did not see him for three long hours together. He too regretted the same; and at last began to account for my ostinacy from his own imagination.

One day he was extremely melancholy, though he seemed as fond of me as ever, if not more tender; but it was accompanied by such an air of dejection, that I forgot the emptiness of my purse, and thought of nothing but him.

Having a dread of his jealous temper, I considered whether this change could be attributed to it. I recalled to mind every circumstance of my behaviour; whereby I dissipated all fears of that sort. I had been so very cautious of giving him offence, that I had avoided the acquaintance of all men, and had not even given a civil answer to those who spoke to me, or thanked them for such civilities as people have an opportunity of paying at a publick place. To do this had been a great force on my disposition, which is naturally free and gay; but I had suffered too much not to conquer it.

Unable to guess at the reason of the depression of my lord's spirits, I begged him to tell it me; and, with some reluctance, he said—'It is cruel, my dear Ophelia, to persecute you any more. I am sensible, if I am unhappy, it is not with your intention: your behaviour shews me, that you are unwilling to make me so; though it afflicts, yet it obliges me; and, by raising my esteem, increases my affection, while it proves the abatement of your's. Do not imagine I mean to reproach you: you are not unjust, though I am unhappy; our inclinations are not in our power; if your's were, I am persuaded I should retain the same portion I once enjoyed. You look surprized; but pardon me, my dearest angel, if I impute your resolution of not going abroad to a desire of conquering some impressions made on your heart, which in publick you fear would be increased. I can assign no other reason for your resisting our importunities, and thus turning us loose in a place of gaiety and dissipation; nor for the confusion and disturbance which is visible in you when we endeavour to get you with us, and the thoughtfulness in which I often perceive you. I admire the efforts you use to conquer this new-born inclination: it is worthy the goodness of your heart; which would make you grieve to render any one so unhappy, as you know I shall be made by the loss of your affections. I have nothing to complain of but my own defects, which prevent my keeping a heart that so generously endeavours to remain mine. I almost pity you for possessing virtues, which increase a love your humanity would wish to diminish: you are far above the low pride of desiring to preserve an affection you cannot return. My kind, my good Ophelia, tell me, with your natural sincerity, if I may hope, that, by thus avoiding my powerful rival, I begin to recover the heart I was in danger of losing.' All this he uttered with so much melancholy and tenderness, that I could have shed tears for his imaginary misfortune. My astonishment at this unaccountable whim was beyond expression. I cried out—'What will not a jealous fancy suggest! How fertile is it's invention! Oh! my lord, how ingenious are you to torment yourself! Who would imagine that all your suppositions have no other foundation than my staying a few days at home! Consider how susceptible you are of fancies that afflict you. Had I been eager to go abroad, I should have given rise to some of these kinds of suspicions,

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'by chuſing to ſtay at home, I have done the ſame. Can nothing but a total indifference to every thing give you the eaſe of mind I wiſh you? I have much of it in my heart; but youth and vivacity will not ſuffer ſuch coldneſs of manner.' I then aſſured him that, ſo far from having found any one whom I was diſpoſed to like too well, I had not even ſeen a man that was more agreeable to me. But all I could ſay, would not convince him. He replied, this was the anſwer of my humanity, not of my truth; that I thought concealment juſtified by the eaſe it might give him; and, in ſhort, he would not believe that his fears were groundleſs, if I would not tell him the reaſons of my leaving off going abroad, when he imagined it was grown more agreeable by my having got into a party at a game, of which I ſeemed very fond. I then told him, the truth was, I had been ſo fooliſh as to loſe too much money to like it any longer. 'That,' replied his lordſhip, 'is no reaſon why you ſhould not go abroad as you did before you played.' Thus he perplexed me by not readily accepting my reaſons, till at laſt I was reduced to tell him, that I thought it would be more prudent to take the honour of the delicate, wiſe, and generous ſentiments, upon which he had ſuppoſed me to act, than to own frankly, that I was ſo very great a fool, as to loſe every ſhilling I had at cards; and by that means had been obliged to keep houſe for want of money to defray the neceſſary expences of going abroad.

I looked ſufficiently ſilly, I believe, when I made this confeſſion; but when I had thus mortified myſelf, it was hard that my lord would ſcarcely credit it. To give a particular deſcription of my folly, was a ſufficient puniſhment for it; but I found this neceſſary, in order to convince his incredulity; ſo, with ſome bluſhes, I told him, that my firſt ill-luck made me deſperate, and I loſt all my money in trying to recover part of it.

Lord Dorcheſter laughed ſo heartily, that he put me almoſt out of humour, and quite out of countenance; but he ſoon acknowledged this to be ſo natural and ſo common, that it was extremely credible; and declared himſelf overjoyed to find that my money, and not my affections, had been won. He would have repaired my ill-fortune, by giving me much more than I choſe to accept. He begged I would not controul my inclinations; for he could furniſh me with a conſiderable ſum yearly, without any inconvenience to himſelf, and could truſt to my prudence for not exceeding it.

I could not forbear returning him thanks for an indulgence, in reality, ſo blameable; but, telling him, that he was willing to build his dependance on a very weak foundation, as my paſt folly too plainly ſhewed, I aſſured him, I was ſufficiently diſguſted with play, and would never again begin any thing to which my prudence found it difficult to put a ſtop.

My lord ſeemed ſo happy at having learnt the cauſe of my retirement, that I could not but think I was peculiarly fortunate in having the power of giving ſo much pleaſure by the diſcovery of my follies. But this ſuſpicious turn in his temper appeared to me very ſtrange: I thought it an unaccountable narrowneſs of mind in a man ſo generous in other reſpects.

I wondered he ſhould ſuppoſe friendſhip could be ſo ſoon conceived or ended, ſince either appeared to me a work of time. One might ſee merit in an early acquaintance, or, in ſome unguarded moment, diſcover faults, which for a long time had been concealed; but the effect could not be ſo ſpeedy. Natural indifference, or habitual fondneſs, require time to conquer them. However, as the covetouſneſs of my affection proved the value he ſet upon it, I was not inclined to complain of the conſequences; but thought myſelf made for the deſtruction of his virtues, ſince only in his behaviour to me, had he ever ſwerved from the moſt extenſive generoſity and tendereſt humanity.

CHAP. XI.

DURING my ſtay at Tunbridge, I ſaw many bad conſequences attend gaming; but none are worth communicating, except one, which was ſo ludicrous, that as it ſoon became publick, it grew a general entertainment. A country gentleman, a few years before, had married a young lady, with whom he made an agreement before marriage, that ſhe ſhould never go to London; to which, as liking the man and his fortune, ſhe readily conſented. After a pretty long ſtay in the country, ſhe began to grow a little tired of her ſolitude, and could not forbear uſing ſome perſuaſions, to pre-

vail

vail on her husband to be more complaisant after marriage than he was before: a strange endeavour certainly; but he being a good-natured man, was sorry to refuse her earnest request; though, as their estate was small, and they had a pretty large family, he could not reconcile it to his conscience. However, as her desire grew very strong, and her importunities frequent, he at last told her, that an expedition to London was too expensive to agree with their finances; but, if she could save up an hundred pounds, (as she had the sole care of the money) he would go with her to Tunbridge, and stay there as long as it lasted.

Thus encouraged in her œconomy, she abridged their own table, starved the servants, and was indefatigable in her endeavours to scrape up this happy sum.

This, in a year's time, she accomplished, and with great joy acquainted her husband with it. He had suffered a little by the change which this sparingness had produced in the entertainment of himself and his friends; but that had never mortified him so much as the knowledge that the sum was compleated. He was fond of the country, loved the sport it afforded, and had, besides, great part of his estate in his hands, for the good management of which his presence was absolutely necessary. However, he would not disappoint his wife, nor break his word: so the day was fixed, and they went thither accordingly. They placed themselves in the first lodgings they could find; but as they were very bad, it was agreed they should change them for better the next week.

Now our lady was in high bliss; and, that all her time might be filled up, was abroad from morning till night. The husband was not fond of any of the diversions going forward there; and found the weariness natural to people at first coming to a place where they have no acquaintance, and where the manner of life is quite different from what they have been accustomed to, or liked; but he did not despond, as he hoped to get into a little more society and hospitality when they had a better apartment.

Accordingly, at the end of the week, he desired his lady to give him the bill in which they had brought their money, that he might get it changed, and then they would go and take good lodgings, and settle themselves in a comfortable and handsome manner. The meek wife was a little confounded, and deferred her compliance, saying it was time enough; their lodgings would serve very well another week, and then they should have better choice, as, in so fluctuating a place, many people would be gone by that time, with many other pretences to delay. But the husband shewing her reasons were not sufficient, persisted in his request.

This increased her confusion to the greatest degree. At last, with downcast looks, conscious blushes, and fluttering voice, she cries—'My dear, I have 'changed the bill!'—'Oh, very well!' answered the husband; 'it will save me 'the trouble of doing it. But give me a 'little money, that I may provide us 'with such things as we want.' The poor lady grew still more distressed; and was reduced to whisper—'I have no 'money!'—'I beg your pardon,' answered he; 'I understood you had changed the bill.—Come, give it me, then; 'and you shall have some presently. I 'assure you, Molly, there is no living at 'this place without money.'—'You are 'right,' answered the penitent wife; 'I 'have changed the bill!'—'Well, well,' replied the husband; 'I am very stupid, 'to be sure; this thick air has affected 'my senses, and I can understand no-'thing. First, I fancied you said you 'had changed the bill; and then, that 'you had no money. I do nothing but 'blunder. Come, my dear, let's go and 'seek for lodgings. Our cousins, of 'Penn Hall, came last night. My uncle 'Crump writes me word he shall be here 'to-morrow; and my aunt Jones is ex-'pected every minute. We must invite 'these friends to dinner. I would not 'have them think we are grown fine 'folks, because we are in a fine place; 'we must not forget our relations. I 'love to live well every where with my 'family.'—'My love,' says again the abashed lady, 'indeed you do not blun-'der. I beg your pardon; but—' and, instead of finishing her sentence, a few tears trickled down her cheeks. 'What 'is the matter with you, Molly?' quoth the husband. 'Why, you are a riddle, I 'think! Come, speak plain, and never 'cry. Why, you know, I am never 'angry. You are my good wife, and 'I love you; say what you please, for 'I cannot bear to see you vexed.'

'You are too good, my dear,' replies the wife, sobbing grievously: 'but 'it must come out; so I may as well

'tell you at firſt, my love, that I have 'loſt——' Here the tears flowed again. 'Oh, you have loſt your purſe, have 'you?' anſwered the huſband. 'Why, 'I am ſorry for you; it is hard you 'ſhould loſe any part of what you had 'ſaved with ſo much care; and I wiſh 'I could afford to make it up to you. 'But we will have it cried; if an honeſt 'perſon has found it, he will reſtore it 'undiminiſhed: but, to be ſure, there 'are more rogues than honeſt men here; 'ſo the chance is againſt us. However, 'if we do not recover it, you are ſo good 'a manager, that we ſhall do very well 'ſome time on the reſt: we muſt live a 'little more ſparingly; that is all.'

'Alas! alas!' cried ſhe, in an agony; 'there is no reſt to live upon! We have 'nothing of which to be ſparing!'— 'What!' ſays he, 'had you all the 'money in your purſe? That was un-'lucky indeed; and, I am afraid, will 'make it more difficult to be recovered; 'for there are people whoſe honeſty 'would have reſiſted twenty pounds, 'who will not be proof againſt an hun-'dred.'

'It was not loſt ſo neither, my dear 'huſband!' replied the lady. 'I will 'confeſs the whole truth, if my tears 'will but let me. You muſt know, 'then, the firſt night I went into the 'rooms, I ſaw a great many people at a 'pretty play; it ſeemed the eaſieſt game 'in the world. Some very civil per-'ſons made room for me; and I could 'not ſee why I ſhould not play as 'others; ſo I ſat down, and began by 'winning: but, before the end of the 'nigh, I loſt a good deal, and was 'obliged to get the man belonging to 'the table to change my bill. The next 'morning I endeavoured to win it back 'again; and did in part. At night, I 'thought I might win the whole; but, 'inſtead of that, I loſt more. I was 'aſhamed to let you know it; but in-'tended, as ſoon as I could get back all 'I had diſburſed, to play no longer, and 'to ſettle all things with you.' Here her ſorrow grew very clamorous; and with much difficulty ſhe ſobbed out— 'In trying to win it, I loſt it all to ten 'guineas!' At this melancholy concluſion, the weeping dame was quite inconſolable: but the huſband, not ſorry to have a good excuſe to return home, where his affairs required his preſence, begged her to make herſelf eaſy; that he came only to divert her; and, as ſhe had had her diverſion, he was perfectly well pleaſed; and as much ſo, that it was done in a ſhort as a long time; that he would pay for their lodgings, and their journey back. He had juſt heard a coach cried that was going to their part of the world; and he would ſecure it directly for them to return in, entreating her to be under no concern. Thus he got her ſafe home, to his great ſatisfaction: nor was the lady ſo mortified as one might imagine, being well out of a ſcrape ſhe feared would have greatly offended her huſband. She thought herſelf much obliged to him for an indulgence which he found very eaſy, as the event of their journey was as agreeable to him as it could be in procuring him a ſpeedy return.

Though in one folly I was kept in countenance, if companions in our weakneſſes can have that effect, yet my ignorance and want of thought had conſequences of ſuch importance, that, if I could have pleaded precedents for my errors, it would have offered me no conſolation.

The diverſions of the place brought me into ſcrapes of which I had no notion before: that which moſt alarmed me, aroſe from a ball.

At the beginning of the evening, I was aſked to dance by a gentleman with whom I had no acquaintance. Having been a good deal indiſpoſed all day, I had determined not to dance, and ſaw nothing in this ſtranger that ſhould conquer my reſolution; with which I acquainted him, and he choſe another partner. Toward the end of the night, being pretty well recovered, a lively tune inſpired me with an inclination for dancing; and Lord Dorcheſter being by me, offered to be my partner, which was an additional inducement; and accordingly we began: but I had not gone down many couples, before I was ſtopped by the gentleman I refuſed, who addreſſed me with ſaying I had not uſed him like a gentleman, in dancing after I had told him I did not chuſe it.

His countenance wore ſuch viſible marks of anger, that he ſtartled me very much; but I anſwered very innocently, that what I ſaid was the real truth; when he aſked me, I did not chuſe to dance, but that I afterwards altered my mind.

To this he replied, that the change he ſuppoſed, was occaſioned by being aſked

asked by a different person; had Lord Dorchester been in his place, the refusal would scarcely have been given.

I was insensible to any affront being designed in this: I thought what he said extremely probable, though it was not then fact; and with great simplicity assured him that he was mistaken, for that, when he asked me, I would not have danced with any one; though, I allowed, to have had Lord Dorchester for a partner might have been a stronger temptation, as my intimacy with him must make him more agreeable to me.

The angry man grew more ireful; and replied, beauty could not excuse insolence: adding, that he did not at all doubt but that I was intimately acquainted with his lordship; who, in return for the intimacy, should teach me how to treat gentlemen of fashion. He continued some time in this strain, repeating the word Intimacy with a sneer, and so strong an emphasis, that I thought it had offended him; but did not imagine he meant more by it than I had done.

My lord did not hear it with the same indifference. He came up to him, and told him it was not acting the part of a gentleman to insult a lady, who, ignorant of the customs of balls, having never been at one before she came to Tunbridge, could not properly be said to offend against a ceremony she knew not. He, in a whisper, offered to defend my intention, and justify his right to me as a partner, when and where he pleased; being as ready to do it as to correct his impertinence and insolent insinuations. 'And,' continued he, 'a man of cou-'rage would chuse to attack one, rather 'than to affront a young lady, from 'whom none but yourself could resent 'any behaviour, though he might feel 'it most sensibly.' Lady Palestine, who was within hearing, cried out to me—'What have you done? You have oc-'casioned a quarrel which may become 'fatal to the life you value above all 'others!' Her words filled me with terror and confusion; I could not comprehend her meaning fully; but was so extremely affected, that Lord Dorchester begged her to be silent, and desired I would permit him to lead me home.

He could not have made a request with which I should more gladly have complied. I feared I knew not what for him, and consequently for myself. If he was with me, I thought us both safe: I wished to carry him from a place which, from what I could learn, I had made dangerous, and hoped to receive from him an explanation of what Lady Palestine had said to me. She followed us immediately, and made me understand the nature of the affront I had given, and the danger that resulted from it. The agonizing fears which now agitated my mind, rendered me incapable of receiving consolation from my lord's assurance that the quarrel would pass over without farther consequences. I could not be persuaded that they were not solely designed to ease my apprehensions; and therefore dared not venture to believe what the next day might prove too fatally untrue. I blamed him for his anger, telling him that, if I had done a thing that was wrong, I deserved a little incivility in return; and that he should not have resented expressions which were not too severe a punishment for an offence against custom, though the error arose from ignorance, not design. Since people in the polite world profess being guided by fashion rather than by reason, I could not stand excused by what is not here a rule of action, nor be justified by truth where, of all places, it is least allowable in a polite circle. I was shocked to find that decorum and politeness required that I should have palliated my refusal with his, and not have owned a preference so very reasonable and so little affronting, that the gentleman might have flattered himself it proceeded only from being acquainted with Lord Dorchester, and entirely unacquainted with him: a circumstance which must greatly lessen the pleasure of dancing with him, however agreeable he might be to those by whom he was better known. But as such were the laws of custom, I thought my error should have been acknowledged, and the gentleman's anger unresented.

Any anger that threatened Lord Dorchester, appeared to me in it's utmost terrors; but nothing could affect me so much as the apprehension of being the occasion of an action which, if not fatal to his life, must be so to his virtues, and consequently to his peace. Duelling, to one unprejudiced, must appear so criminal, so contrary to every branch of morality and religion, that I could not bear my lord should have the most distant intention of committing it; that alone I thought a sufficient crime to sully the

purity of his mind for ever. His not perpetrating his design could not make me easy; that he should have ever harboured the least thought of it, was an insurmountable affliction to me, who valued his integrity as much as his life, and was as tender of the one as of the other.

Lady Palestine laughed at my esteeming so criminal, an action which she called *spirited* and *honourable*, and almost requisite to the perfection of a *fine gentleman's* character, in which courage was the most necessary ingredient. Not considering that a defiance of the laws of God deserves a far worse name, and can never, to a well-judging mind, wear the disguise of any virtue. Her sentiments raised an abhorrence in me which my regard for her could not suppress; but I received some satisfaction from finding my lord did not differ much from my opinion; but owned, that the properest object for true courage was the resistance of a custom which contradicted the Divine Will, and that duels proceeded from a degree of cowardice which is always most moved by present danger; and therefore had stronger fears of the censure of mankind, which is a punishment immediately inflicted, than of the wrath of God, whose effects may for some years be suspended. He confessed that, when he had ever been in danger of fighting a duel, he was always sensible his motive was a want of real valour, which he esteemed, but knew not how to acquire.

CHAP. XII.

THOUGH the night put an end to a conversation in which we were not likely to agree perfectly, as our real sentiments differed, yet it could not afford me any rest. The opinion my lord had expressed of duelling, in a great degree, abated my fear of any such event: but yet, as he confessed his own weakness, at the same time he acknowledged the crime, I could not think the safety of his person certain; and was sensible that his mind was not less contaminated, but rather more so, from the sense of the ill which he had thought of committing. I trembled for the man who could regard his fellow-creatures more than their Great Creator; and suffer the most pernicious custom to banish *religion*, and even plain *morality*, from his breast.

Immersed in these reflections, the morning found me; my heart was too much oppressed to suffer me to think of rest; I had not even entertained a thought of going to bed: but, after having sent away my maid, had yielded myself up to my meditations.

As soon as my lord was up, which I learned from a message he sent to enquire after my health, I went to him in his dressing-room, rather to confine than to converse with him; for I could not think of letting him go out of the house, unless I could have accompanied him, which was by no means proper; for the agitation of my mind, and want of rest, had made such alterations in my countenance, that I was not fit to be seen. My lord had an air of thoughtfulness, which increased my fears. Indeed, my conversation was not fit to remove it; but even Lady Palestine's vivacity was ineffectual. He was serious, but not disturbed; his thoughts took a graver turn than common, but were not at all confused. This gave me some hope that the alteration which alarmed me might arise only from the sense of the rashness he had been guilty of: I could not believe that a man, while under the actual intention of a crime, could possess any composure of mind. Confusion and terror I imagined to be the necessary consequence of criminal designs; and therefore received some consolation at perceiving none of those symptoms of guilt in him. Though I could not obtain a promise from him that he would not fight with the man who had made me so wretched, yet he said every thing that he hoped might make me easy; but the want of that assurance weighed heavier in the scale of fear.

A visit from a gentleman with whom I knew him to be intimately acquainted, obliged me to withdraw; for my eyes were so swelled, I was ashamed of being seen: but I entreated Lady Palestine to keep sight of my lord; an office to which her own fears inclined her. When I retired to my chamber, I began, as was my custom when afflicted with vexation, to lament my having been taken from my retirement; but my thoughts soon took another turn, on reflecting how severely my lord might suffer by having brought me from thence. The punishment that threatened him extenuated his offence; and I only grieved that he was not born there with me; that he had not likewise been placed in a solitude where death

was under God's immediate direction, and none can paſs into another world, till the Almighty had diſmiſſed them from this, and opened for them the gates of eternity.

Above an hour had paſſed in theſe reflections, when I was raiſed by the entrance of Lady Paleſtine, who had ſuch conſternation in her countenance as ſtruck terror to my ſoul. My fear turned me to a ſtatue; I could neither ſpeak nor move: but ſhe rendered all enquiries unneceſſary, by telling me that, ſoon after I withdrew, Lord Dorcheſter deſired her to ſtep out of the room, for he had a little buſineſs to tranſact with his viſitor. As he had long employed this gentleman in ſome affairs, ſhe was not ſurprized at the requeſt, but complied with it. She long waited in expectation of being told they would be glad of her company, ſuppoſing the buſineſs that had required her abſence could not laſt long; but finding her expectations not anſwered, ſhe attended more carefully, and could not hear any one in the room; upon which ſhe entered, and found it indeed empty.

She thought it ſo impoſſible that Lord Dorcheſter ſhould have evaded her care, that ſhe was going to ſeek for him in the houſe; when ſhe obſerved, on a ſhelf againſt the door, a ſealed packet, which ſhe had not perceived before ſhe withdrew, and, as ſhe imagined, put there as the ſafeſt place, there being no bureau or drawer in the room. Pen, ink, and paper, on the table whereon we had breakfaſted, ſhewed her they had been uſed. She found the packet was directed, by Lord Dorcheſter, for me.

Drawing very melancholy concluſions from theſe circumſtances, ſhe was greatly ſhocked. She brought me the packet, which I opened as ſoon as I was able, though I rather expected to learn more certain grounds for my fears than any thing that could abate them. And, indeed, my grief received a very great addition from the contents; which were a will, as it ſaid, made for greater ſecurity in confirmation of one he had left in London, whereby he bequeathed me his whole fortune.

This proof both of the danger that threatened his life, and of the ſtrength of his affection, had ſo melancholy an effect upon me, that I fell into fits; from which Lady Paleſtine found it ſo difficult to recover me, that ſhe left the fruitleſs trial to my ſervants, and gave her care where ſhe hoped it might be of more real ſervice.

She made all poſſible enquiry, in order to find which way Lord Dorcheſter had gone; but not being able to get any information, ſhe knew not how to contrive means of having him purſued, which was her intention. From this perplexity ſhe was at length relieved by a gentleman, who, by a deſire of avoiding company, and taking a quiet walk, had choſen the leaſt frequented places, and, in the moſt retired ſpot, found Lord Dorcheſter and his antagoniſt fighting. It was not without difficulty he parted them. My lord had received no hurt; but his adverſary was wounded in two or three places, but not mortally; my lord's aim being to diſarm him, without giving any conſiderable wound.

The gentleman, whoſe preſence had been ſo fortunate, waited on Lord Dorcheſter home; who, on his arrival, found me in a condition that revenged me for the fright he had given me, by occaſioning equal fears in him. The obſtinacy of my diſorder made him ſend for a phyſician, whoſe aſſiſtance he hoped might relieve me. Whether the art of this ſon of Æſculapius, or my natural ſtrength, might more properly claim the honour of my cure, I will not pretend to ſay; but one or the other wrought my recovery.

The firſt object I beheld was Lord Dorcheſter, who, ſtanding at my bedſide, was watching the ſymptoms of amendment. Joy and perception now ſeemed but one. To ſee him ſafe filled me with tranſports, which words could not have expreſſed at a time when I had more at command; but at that happy inſtant I was ſpeechleſs, not being ſufficiently recovered. However, ſilence did not conceal my joy: I embraced my lord with a tenderneſs that ſurprized him. He has told me ſince, that, till then, he knew not half the impreſſion he had made on my heart, though he had long perceived I loved him with a ſtronger affection than I myſelf imagined.

The grave doctor's countenance expreſſed ſo much ſurprize, that it did not paſs unobſerved by me; but attributing it to his having outlived the lively ſenſe of joy, ſo natural at my time of life, I thought it no reaſon for me to confine the vivacity of ſenſations, as innocent as if they had been chilled by old age, and therefore did not conceal the tranſports of

of my heart. Since I became better acquainted with the world, I have been inclined to believe that I incurred the old gentleman's private cenſure; but as ſecreſy is full as neceſſary in that profeſſion as knowledge in phyſick, he did not publiſh a behaviour which I ſuppoſed he thought indecent.

As ſoon as I was quite recovered, the doctor was diſmiſſed, and reſolutions were taken for our leaving Tunbridge, whoſe waters had removed the complaints which brought me thither; and I had now no diſorder remaining but what was the conſequence of my fright, and would be cured by eaſe of mind. I had therefore no occaſion to ſtay longer. Lord Dorcheſter did not like to remain where he was continually expoſed to hear his conduct canvaſſed; and your ladyſhip will imagine it could not be agreeable to me to liſten to an univerſal diſcuſſion of my inadvertency, ſince the conſequences of it made it appear almoſt criminal.

Lord Dorcheſter left the place in two days; but Lady Paleſtine, on pretences to which I was obliged to ſubmit, detained me there above a week after him; but I have ſince learnt that this was concerted between them, to avoid giving room for the increaſe of the reports which began to be ſpread of a mutual attachment between my lord and myſelf, which would have received great ſtrength from our leaving Tunbridge together.

CHAP. XIII.

AFTER Lord Dorcheſter left Tunbridge, the place grew very tireſome to me. I had nothing to do but to obſerve the various follies of the companies, and to ſtudy vanity, which I perceived ſuffered alteration rather than diminution by time. The woman who in her youth placed her ſupreme joy in the flattery of the other ſex, and in the number of partners ſhe had at her command, when activity is no longer in the legs, and age has ſtiffened the joints and ſunk the ſpirits; in ſhort, when pertneſs has undergone it's uſual transformation into dulneſs, and an old age of cards ſucceeds a youth of folly, a plentiful ſupply of gentlemen of her party becomes the great object of her ambition; and the contention between her and her cotemporaries of the ſame taſte, will be as great as their envy while they were rival beauties. The appearance of a man of quality juſt arrived, awakes an equal impatience in both to add him to their party; while, he, wavering between the importunities of each, keeps them in a ſuſpence that increaſes their enmity. At the beginning of a ſeaſon a private gentleman finds himſelf of conſequence; but has the mortification of perceiving that he dwindles in their eſteem on the arrival of a nobleman; who in his turn becomes neglected, if one of higher degree can be had to ſupply it's place: for the vanity of theſe ladies is ſo voracious, that notwithſtanding the party is full, they are ſo eager to raiſe the dignity of it, that, after dropping the plebeians one by one as they gather patricians, the nobility at laſt become obliged to each other for their releaſe: thus a duke ſets an earl at liberty, the earl a viſcount, the viſcount a lord; as the lord did a baronet, and he before the untitled gentleman.

Nothing appeared to me more ſtrange than the love of precedency. I have often been diverted to ſee how much pains a lady would take to walk firſt out of a room where lazineſs would have inclined her to remain; and laſt into another, where ſhe was ſo little wiſhed, and ſo little pleaſure attracted her, that ſhe could not have come too late. In this particular I gave great offence when I firſt went to Tunbridge; and while I took place of thoſe who had a real title to it, I received only a cool contempt for my want of breeding, and they would drop the acquaintance of the *vulgar thing*. But having gone before a young lady whoſe right of place was diſputed, ſhe purſued me with ſuch ſwiftneſs, and aſſerted her prerogative ſo forcibly, that ſhe threw me down a flight of a dozen ſteps, thereby impreſſing my want of good-breeding ſtrongly on my mind; and the ſenſe of it being kept awake by my bruiſes, I afterwards became ſo cautious, that nothing but a deſire to eſcape ſome impending danger could have induced me to have taken place even of a milliner. With no ſmall entertainment have I obſerved a young lady whoſe father had not been long ranked among the nobility, break off in a ſtory ſhe was eagerly telling, the ſubject being herſelf, and leave her honour and glory imperfectly celebrated, in order to get out of the door before the daughter of a new-made peer, whom ſhe ſaw going towards it; while her mother, at a few yards diſtance,

ſtance, was prolonging her diſcourſe with all poſſible impertinence, that ſhe might leave the room at the ſame time with the newer peereſs, and have the pleaſure of aſſerting her prerogative.

But the laſt day of my ſtay at Tunbridge, I was taken off from this employ of the idle, the impertinently-critical obſervations of others, which render them almoſt as deſtructive to ſociety as thoſe who are buried in miſchief. Lord Larborough, who by Lord Dorcheſter's departure was become my partner in dancing, and my principal companion in converſation, gave me a more affecting and more intereſting ſubject for my thoughts. He had long profeſſed a great friendſhip for me; and for ſome time had added to the appearance of it, by the moſt minute attentions, and thoſe flattering diſtinctions which inſenſibly gain the eſteem and regard of a young perſon. I converſed with him with all the freedom and confidence of friendſhip; not more pleaſed with him on his own account, than from knowing my lord's affection for him.

From the time Lord Dorcheſter went away, Lord Larborough never mentioned him without a ſeeming perplexity; and when I would indulge myſelf in giving him the praiſes I thought his due, he would turn the diſcourſe, and drop little hints which at the time paſſed without my notice, though his unwillingneſs to dwell on the ſubject moſt pleaſing to me rendered his company leſs agreeable.

The day before we left the place, Lord Larborough appeared very uneaſy. I could not forbear enquiring the reaſon of it; to which he replied, that the thought of going away diſtreſſed him.

I aſked what could attach him to that place, ſince he appeared to have no intimacy with any perſon there, and was not of ſo trifling a diſpoſition as to take any great delight in the pitiful amuſements it afforded, or to compare them with the more ſolid pleaſure ariſing from the ſincere friendſhip and converſation of a man whoſe mind was full of variety, whoſe wit was inexhauſtible, his judgment ſolid, and his learning extenſive; of which no one could be ſo ſenſible as himſelf, ſince he had an underſtanding capable of perceiving and taſting his friend's excellence, and ſaw him, when confident in his affection, remove all reſtraint and diſguiſe.

Lord Dorcheſter's name would have been an unneceſſary addition; Lord Larborough could not doubt his being the man I meant, and accordingly anſwered, that he wiſhed diſguiſe was leſs requiſite to ſupport the good character of many people. Had that never been baniſhed, the converſation of the man I ſo highly eſteemed would have been more delightful to him, and he ſhould not have been obliged, when he admired the underſtanding, to have grieved that the heart had ſhared ſo little of the perfection too laviſhly beſtowed on the other.

I could not hear aſperſions ſo contrary to my ſentiments without reſentment; and expreſſing myſelf warmly on his venting ſuch injurious inſinuations, he replied, he was every way unfortunate if he had incurred my diſpleaſure by a ſlight expreſſion of the indignation nothing but affection for me had raiſed. Had the part of Lord Dorcheſter's character he reflected on concerned any other perſon, he ſhould have beheld it with the ſame indifference he did the views of his other friends; but ſince his reſentment had excited my anger, he ſhould never more touch on the ſubject; which indeed he knew not how he came to do at all; he could curſe his tongue for giving way to the ſincerity of his heart; and hinting at ſecrets which my lord's confidence in him had bound him by ſtronger ties to conceal, than his affections for me could offer for diſcovering them, he begged me to forget what he had ſaid, and never let one thought reſt on his inexcuſable inadvertency. Fortunately, though I am not naturally very curious, this made me ſo; I deſired he would tell me plainly what he meant, but he excuſed himſelf from complying. As I preſſed him ſtill more earneſtly, he more abſolutely denied me, till at laſt I gave it up in deſpair. As if his reſiſtance was wearied out at the ſame time with my importunities, but in reality as he did not deſign to keep the ſecret, he was then reduced to declare that he was not able to diſobey my commands, that I was abſolute miſtreſs of him, and he wiſhed he could ſay of his fortune likewiſe, which he would lay at my feet, if it could in any way alleviate the ſenſe he feared I ſhould have of the treachery he was going to relate. By the force of this preparation, I began to tremble before he commenced his narration; but every word increaſed my horror. He began in the following manner. 'I muſt previouſly acquaint 'you, that it is very cuſtomary for gen-

'tlemen

'tlemen to live with women as if they 'were married, without being ſo; which 'has this convenience, that they can 'leave them whenever they are tired, or 'ſee another they like better. You 'have by great care been kept ignorant 'of this cuſtom, leſt it might fruſtrate 'his lordſhip's intentions, by raiſing 'your ſuſpicions of them; for all his 'hopes of ſucceſs depend on the ſtrength 'of your affection, joined with un-'ſuſpecting innocence. To ſhew what 'his deſires are, he waits impatiently to 'find ſome moment when your virtue 'ſhall be off it's guard; this he may rea-'ſonably expect, while you are in no ap-'prehenſion of an enemy!'

Here I could not ſuppreſs an exclamation ſuggeſted by my hatred to ſuch principles, but cried out—'What a baſis for 'ſo vile, ſo treacherous an intention! 'Can love and innocence be turned into 'a means of ruin by the perſon who 'ought moſt to protect them!'

'Every thing,' he continued, 'has 'hitherto been ſo well ordered, that no 'one ſuſpects you are not a woman of 'real fortune, otherwiſe innocence could 'not have preſerved you from infamy; 'for all people would, on the know-'ledge of your being thus maintained at 'his expence, judge you guilty of the 'worſt returns. A fate you muſt ex-'pect whenever chance ſhall diſcloſe the 'ſecret, which ſooner or later will hap-'pen.'

It is impoſſible to expreſs what I felt during this narration. All I had ever ſuffered, the fear of every evil, the perſuaſion of his inconſtancy, were trifling pains to the thought of ſuch baſeneſs in a mind I had eſteemed the ſeat of virtue. I could better endure an eternal ſeparation from him, than thus to find him a ſtranger to goodneſs. My ſurprize, and my deteſtation of all Lord Larborough had told me, was ſo great, that I could expreſs it only by involuntary ſigns. I was ſtruck dumb with ſo amazing a diſcovery. To this ſucceeded reflections on the probability of it. My love for Lord Dorcheſter ſeized on this only hope with eagerneſs, and I declared that the account I had liſtened to was paſt belief; and he having concluded with offering his houſe and protection, and aſſuring me of the greatneſs of his affection, I added, that I could eaſier imagine that the love he profeſſed had the conſequence I obſerved to be ſo common in his country, jealouſy, and a deſire ariſing from it of getting me from him who till my laſt breath muſt be cheriſhed by me as my deareſt friend, rather than give way for one hour to ſo injurious a ſuſpicion of one in whom I had experienced and obſerved the beſt qualities our imperfect nature admitted. Lord Larborough was piqued at my reply: he told me, if I choſe to nouriſh the error I was in, he had no more to ſay; but perhaps the proſpect he had drawn was not ſo ſhocking to me as he had imagined it would be. If I was deſirous of ſearching into the truth of what he had ſaid, he would convince me whenever I pleaſed.

This propoſal ſtartled me; it gave an air of truth to what he had related, which I could have wiſhed not to have found in it; but in a doubt of ſuch importance to me I could not reſt, therefore begged to have it cleared up as ſoon as poſſible. He then informed me that there was an eaſy method of diſcovering the whole the firſt evening he ſhould ſpend at my houſe with Lord Dorcheſter, after I got to London. I had nothing to do but to excuſe myſelf ſoon after ſupper on pretence of the head-ach, and a deſire of going to bed; but, inſtead of doing ſo, to conceal myſelf where I might hear all that ſhould paſs between them. I came into this, ſo anxious was I to know the truth of this dreadful account; though it appeared to me diſhonourable for me to liſten to what one is not intended to hear; yet ſurely, if ever excuſable, it was ſo in my caſe. If Lord Dorcheſter was ſo very criminal as Lord Larborough repreſented, I could not expect an honeſt confeſſion from him; and a denial of it, though ſincere, would not have entirely conquered my ſuſpicions, or, conſequently, have reſtored either my happineſs or his; which depended, in ſome meaſure, on my confidence and eaſe of mind. If, in diſowning ſuch intentions, he denied the truth, my ſituation was too dangerous to remain ſafely in it. Beſides, if a diſintereſted regard was ſo uncommon in this country, I perceived, that though I ſhould keep my innocence, I muſt loſe the reputation of it, which, next to it, ought to be a woman's firſt care. To be obliged both to leave him and conquer my affection, was indeed a taſk too hard for my weak reaſon; but I flattered myſelf, that, if this ſhould prove true, my friendſhip would be turned into contempt. I loved him for the appear-

ance of goodneſs and truth which he ever wore; if he proved different from what I believed him, the love founded on that belief ought to change; I hoped it would not outlive the object, as I could not reflect on the virtues I thought he poſſeſſed, without recollecting they were profaned by being made a cloak to vice and injuſtice. I waited with impatience for the hour in which we ſhould ſet forth on our journey, fearing, yet wiſhing, to learn what truth there was in Lord Larborough's accuſation. I was not without hopes of finding it a fiction; but yet, when I recollected every circumſtance of Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour, my apprehenſions were increaſed. If mankind were what Lord Larborough repreſented them, I had indeed great reaſon to ſuſpect my lord's views were ſuch as had been deſcribed to me; but I was unwilling to let my thoughts dwell on ſo cruel a probability, and ſet out from Tunbridge with a mind ſo divided betwixt hope and fear, as is, I believe, more painful than the worſt certainty; for anxiety is a more grievous ſtate, as it is more turbulent than deſpair.

CHAP. XIV.

AS we approached London, expectation of the event made me full of trouble; and with great reaſon, ſince it was to determine my future happineſs or miſery. Cruel uncertainty! The greateſt misfortune, certain and preſent, could not exceed the torment of the anxious fears that then oppreſſed me. My fluttering, fond, but honeſt heart, was robbed of peace, and ſcarcely hoped ever again to enjoy it's beloved tranquillity. I had no occaſion to feign myſelf ſick; alas! I was ſo in reality: my ſtrength, my colour, almoſt my life, had failed me, from the time my ears had received the killing narration. Could I have diſtruſted Providence, or repined at it's almighty, and, however obſcure, it's juſt decrees, I ſhould have complained of my hard fate, in thus being toſſed about by more uncertain things than winds and waves, the inclination of a fantaſtick mercileſs race of mortals.

How does diſtreſs heighten devotion, which in proſperity is apt to grow languid! With what ardent zeal did I addreſs the Almighty, and to his beſt will reſign myſelf! Prayed for a continuance of the happineſs that fatal day had interrupted; or, if that petition was preſumptuous, and I might not dictate to his wiſdom, which watches over all his works, I only begged that I might preſerve untainted the virtue he had given me, improve the portion I was born with, and not to live to ſee myſelf ſwerve from his moſt righteous laws; but that his grace would ſtill vouchſafe to protect the creature of his power, the dependent on his mercy!

When I arrived, I found Lord Dorcheſter waiting for me at my houſe. He perceived I was very ill, and ſeemed greatly concerned at it: my illneſs excuſed my converſing; for which, indeed, I was but ill qualified. He tried, with his enchanting tenderneſs, to ſoothe my pains; but I was now acting the hypocrite, complaining of my head, while my heart was the only ſufferer; and that was more diſtreſſed than relieved by his care and fondneſs. The ſcene was difficult for me to ſupport; and I was glad when Lord Larborough came in. As ſoon as ſupper was over I left them; but went into a cloſet, the door of which I had purpoſely ſet open. I was no ſooner in appearance gone, than Lord Dorcheſter began to expreſs the great uneaſineſs he was under at ſeeing me ſo ill, as he was afraid it might be the beginning of a fit of ſickneſs. Lord Larborough took this opportunity of bringing on the diſcourſe he aimed at. 'Indeed, my friend,' ſaid he, 'I am not ſurprized at the greatneſs 'of your apprehenſions; to be robbed by 'death of the fruit of all your ſchemes, 'all your attendance, generoſity, and 'love, would mortify a man leſs paſſionately fond than yourſelf.'

'If you do not wiſh to be troubled 'with a very bad companion all this 'evening,' replied Lord Dorcheſter, 'mention not the word Death. The 'thought of her ſuffering any pain, is 'more than I can ſupport without a 'conſiderable diminution of ſpirits. 'But, whatever happens, I can never 'think I have been unrewarded for any 'thing my love has made me do, if it 'has hitherto rendered her happy, which 'I flatter myſelf it has done. Her kind 'and innocent marks of affection would 'recompenſe me for any pain or trouble, whereas my care of her has been 'my greateſt joy.'

'Well,' anſwered Lord Larborough, 'I will no farther affront your genero-

'ſity, though I cannot flatter you ſo 'far as to ſay you have acted through 'a mere love of that virtue. If thoſe 'godlike qualities were to be found un-'mixed among mankind, I ſhould ſooner 'expect to ſee them in you than in any 'one; but in truth, my friend, ſenſe 'has had as great a ſhare in the direc-'tion of your actions as ſentiment: pray 'which has been moſt gratified?'

'As for gratification,' ſaid Lord Dor-cheſter, 'ſentiment has had much the 'beſt time of it. Ophelia is certainly 'above us mortals; ſhe never conde-'ſcends, like goddeſſes of old, to diveſt 'herſelf for one moment of her divinity; 'and for any hopes of amendment I can 'ſee, I may worſhip my deity till the end 'of my life, without finding her once 'propitious to her votary's wiſhes.'

'I am afraid,' anſwered Lord Lar-borough, 'you underſtand the arts of 'love leſs than thoſe of any other kind, 'or you could not now be as far from 'your hopes as when you firſt took her 'from her ſolitude.'

'I believe,' replied Lord Dorcheſter, 'I may practiſe the arts of love with leſs 'ſkill for having ſo much of the reality. 'I have ſo true an eſteem and reſpect 'for her, that I reverence her virtues 'and her underſtanding, while I adore 'her perſon. Thoſe awful ſenſations 'are great retarders of a lover's progreſs; 'but yet I flatter myſelf with a different 'opinion from yours. I cannot help 'thinking I have made a conſiderable 'ſtep towards ſucceſs: I have gained 'her heart, my lord; and I take that to 'be the ſure road to her perſon. It is 'impoſſible a woman ſhould always re-'ſiſt both her love and her lover; they 'muſt prevail in time, how great ſoever 'her prudence may be, or I ſhall never 'believe woman was made out of the 'rib of a man, and yet differ ſo much 'from our natures. I already begin to 'ſuſpect, that Miſs Lenox ſprung from 'another creation, and was made out of 'ſome more icy compoſition than the 'reſt of woman-kind. But yet, truſt 'me, however cold ſhe may naturally 'be, her tenderneſs for me, my paſ-'ſionate love for her, with that inno-'cence which takes from her all ſuſpi-'cion, conſequently all fear of having 'the object of her affections watching 'for a complying moment, muſt in time 'yield me the reward for my loving 'ſervices and diſappointments. I am 'certainly a coward, for I have not yet 'ventured to attempt any liberties which 'a veſtal might not permit. When my 'ſpirits are at the higheſt, and I think 'my paſſion no longer to be hid, there 'is a purity around her, ſuch awful 'purity in every look and word, that I 'bow to virtue, and worſhip it in her 'fair form. There is more innocence 'in her careſſes, than can be found in 'the coldneſs of any other woman. In-'ſtead of encouraging my hopes, they 'damp them while they charm me; and 'ſhew the beſt affections in ſuch beau-'ty, that I cannot forbear calling my-'ſelf a villain for not being more like 'her.'—'And pray,' ſaid Lord Larbo-rough, 'by what means do you make 'peace with yourſelf?'

'By reflecting that, if ſhe loves me, ſhe 'will remain very happy,' replied Lord Dorcheſter. 'Marriage is of human 'invention; for was it a neceſſary cere-'mony, we muſt be all baſtards, as we 'have no reaſon to believe Adam and 'Eve had the ſanction of the prieſt for 'their union. Theirs was the wedlock 'of hearts, the true matrimony of affec-'tion. I and my Ophelia will, like our 'firſt parents, love by our own and Na-'ture's licence, with more warmth, 'more tenderneſs, ſincerity, and con-'ſtancy, than the obedient ſervants of 'the church, the ſlaves of cuſtom, can 'boaſt. We will love to the end of our 'lives, always aſſured of each other's 'affections by unabated aſſiduity and 'tenderneſs. Neceſſity ſhall have no 'hand in our union; for I will make a 'ſettlement on her which ſhall render 'her perfectly independent of me. We 'ſhall be linked only by love, and there-'fore cannot doubt of the ſtrength of the 'chain while neither breaks it.'

'A moſt noble rapture, truly!' inter-rupted Lord Larborough. 'Since eter-'nal conſtancy is your ſcheme, why not 'marry? Surely wedlock ſhould only 'terrify the fickle.'

'Have I not often told you,' ſaid Lord Dorcheſter, 'with how much juſtice I 'diſlike matrimony? The ill fate of 'all my family in that ſtate, has created 'an inſurmountable averſion to it in 'me. Beſides, I am more unfit for it 'than any man; as being ſo fearful of 'loſing the affections of one I love, that 'I could never be eaſy while it was her 'intereſt to live with me. It is true, I 'know and love Ophelia's ſincerity; but

'I am

'I am equally acquainted with my own temper: I could fear her truth and openneſs of heart ſhould be corrupted by our vile cuſtoms; ſhe might give herſelf to me in marriage out of prudence and intereſt. I would receive her as the gift of Love alone. Her heart muſt give her to me, and mine receive her, as the pure votary of Love; mine, and only mine, excluſive of all prudential, all lucrative views. This is the trueſt bliſs my heart can know. But in the midſt of all this glorious imaginary felicity, comes acroſs this painful queſtion: Oh, my friend! when can ſuch virtue be ſubdued? I fear ſhe is exalted above human weakneſſes; though to leave the diſpoſal of herſelf to the prieſt, rather than to her heart, would be only compliance with ſervile cuſtom, and not virtue, which can never be the gift of a fooliſh ceremony; it conſiſts in conſtancy, not words; and we will be more conſtant than licenſed matrimonial couples, who love from duty; whoſe paſſions are ſo cool, they aſk leave to burn, requiring the ſanction of a cold, withered, inſenſible prieſt, to whom all-powerful Nature is made to relinquiſh her ſway. Ophelia ought more than any one to obey that firſt parent, who has laviſhly diſpenſed to her her beſt gifts. She who ſtill enjoys her natural innocence, who has made uncommon progreſs in the knowledge of all good, and yet remains as ignorant of evil as on the day ſhe was firſt numbered among the ſpecies ſhe was born to eclipſe, has no occaſion to be confined to political rules, made to keep thoſe in order who have not a better guide within their own minds.'

'Pray,' anſwered Lord Larborough, do not treat all the reſt of womankind with ſuch contempt. The ignorance you boaſt of is not meritorious; if it is, you are the perſon who ſhould have the honour of it. Is there any virtue in not knowing the evil ſhe has never ſeen? You have ſpread the veil which has concealed it all from her eyes; and then, like a true irrational lover, admire her for not ſeeing what was not viſible to her. Her part is natural: your contrivance is all that can create wonder; and I can never think of it without ſurprize. However, I cannot imagine it poſſible to continue this ignorance, where matter for inſtruction is ſo frequent as in this town, and to which ſome of the acquaintances to whom you have introduced her are not novices.'

'You muſt have been wrapt in cold indifference all your life-time,' replied Lord Dorcheſter, 'or you would know that nothing is impoſſible to a true lover. A ſhort acquaintance with her principles, ſhewed me the neceſſity of preſerving her from all ſuſpicion of my deſign. The only method was to keep her in ignorance of the ways of men in this enlightened corner of the world. From the dull ſimplicity and innocence in which ſhe was bred, the leaſt ſhadow of vice of any kind ſhocks her; by which I was convinced her prejudices in favour of lawful unions muſt be great. This excited my invention; and I conſidered all ways of keeping the difference of our manners from her knowledge. I inſtructed her ſervant, but without imparting my reaſons to her; and, as I furniſhed her with books, I have carefully excluded all by which ſhe could form a notion of any cuſtoms that might raiſe ſuſpicions in her mind; and this I have found poſſible without retarding any uſeful improvement of her underſtanding. When the heart does not dictate a probability of evil in others, the owner is eaſier deceived into a good opinion of mankind than you imagine. I had a deſire of bringing her into the world, thinking it would amuſe and make her happier, which, next to my own happineſs in one point, is my firſt conſideration. But here was my great difficulty; how to prevent her ſeeing, when the object was before her eyes, puzzled me. However, having great confidence in female invention, I opened my whole ſcheme to my couſin Lady Paleſtine, who, I knew, would willingly aſſiſt me, as ſhe is one of Cupid's beſt friends; and, like a good woman, has ſo equal a love for her neighbour and herſelf, that ſhe is glad to help them in any way wherein ſhe would be induſtriouſly gratified. She, in this reſpect, lives up to the golden rule, and does to others as ſhe would they ſhould do unto her. This made her fit for my purpoſe. The art ſhe has had to keep herſelf in high faſhion, and be careſſed by the world, and even by ſuch whoſe behaviour and character give one room to believe that the merits I found in her were of no

'uſe nor recommendation to them, made 'her acquaintance proper for my honeſt, 'my innocent Ophelia, at the ſame time 'ſhe was uſeful to me. I eſteem the 'purity of my angel's heart, and the 'goodneſs of her principles too highly, 'to introduce her into company that 'might pervert either. It would be im-'politick to leſſen the merits of the ob-'ject of our affections in ſo eſſential a 'point, in order to gain the poſſeſſion of 'their perſons. I have had great reaſon 'to be pleaſed with my choice: Lady 'Paleſtine has excelled herſelf in the ma-'nagement of this affair; and ſome for-'tunate circumſtances have aſſiſted our 'deſign. Miſs Lenox's great unhappi-'neſs at being obſerved and looked at, 'which was the neceſſary conſequence 'of her appearing in publick, was of 'excellent ſervice to us. We adviſed her 'to be ſilent as to the place of her birth, 'and all the paſſages of her paſt life; and 'this on pretence of ſaving her the pain 'of univerſal obſervation, which other-'wiſe, by their novelty, would be ex-'cited. She complied: the reſt has been 'our care. You know we have reported 'her a relation of mine, of a large for-'tune, left by a dying father to my 'guardianſhip.

'By theſe little deceits, her reputation 'has hitherto continued unblemiſhed. I 'verily believe the envy of the world 'would by this time have ſpent a little 'of it's venom in ſlander, had any other 'woman been in her place: but the in-'nocence and openneſs of heart ex-'preſſed in her countenance, damps all 'ſuſpicion, and diſarms ſcandal of it's 'ſting.

'I have likewiſe contrived to prevent 'all intimacies with any of her own ſex, 'except my uſeful couſin; leſt converſing 'with them might overthrow my ſcheme. 'I was, ſome time ago, a little uneaſy at 'a great diſpoſition I perceived in her 'towards Miſs Baden, who was not un-'willing to cultivate her acquaintance. 'I could not wonder at either, without 'ſeeing all the bad qualities which many 'poſſeſs: the good in Miſs Baden's diſ-'poſition ſhines ſo clearly, that it could 'not eſcape the obſervation of Ophelia, 'who ſees by the light of reaſon; that 'beſt diſtinguiſher of truth. An inti-'macy between them ſeemed natural, 'and I feared the ill-effects of it: but 'my uneaſineſs was perceived by my 'lovely charmer; and I believe a kind, 'though ſilent compliance with it, put 'a ſtop to all increaſe of acquaintance.

'I found ſhe conſtrued my diſlike into 'jealouſy. She has not the leaſt notion 'why we ſhould be jealous but of our 'friend's affections; and, in that caſe, it 'muſt be equally excited by man or wo-'man, who ſeems likely to ſhare them 'with us.

'I began now to have fewer appre-'henſions than ever of her learning the 'cuſtoms of her ſex. Time and ſucceſs 'have hardened me; but inſtead of it 'another ariſes, which is what I have 'already mentioned, that I ſhall never 'find the unguarded moment I have ſo 'long waited for. To declare my in-'tentions, or give her reaſon to find them 'out, would be loſing all my hope. My 'ſole dependance is on the frailty of hu-'man kind, and ſhe ſeems to be void of 'any. I thought I had only a woman 'to reſiſt me. Who would have expected 'that an angel ſhould be hid in a cot-'tage, while we frail mortals inhabit 'palaces!'

I had now heard too much; my doubts were turned into the moſt painful certainty; and I could not ſtay to liſten to more of a converſation, every word of which gave freſh pain to my heart. So I retired out of another door, and went to my own room.

CHAP. XV.

UPON retiring to my chamber, I found ſome eaſe from the liberty of indulging the ſighs and tears which I had been obliged to ſuppreſs while I was ſo near the cauſe of all my grief. I was the whole night incapable of every thing but lamenting my unhappy lot, in being among a people with whom I was ſo unequally matched. The violence of my affliction perſuaded me that I hated the man who had occaſioned it; but, as dejection ſucceeded to diſtraction, (for by no other name can I call my firſt emotions) the neceſſity of leaving one whoſe aim was my deſtruction, informed me more certainly of the true ſtate of my heart. I found it ſtill repined at the thought of abſenting myſelf from him, whoſe preſence ought to have raiſed deteſtation in me: but this only ſerved to determine me the more ſtrongly to fly from that place, where I no longer could be ſafe, ſince I was myſelf my enemy; and reſolved, if I could

I could not command my heart, at leaſt to puniſh it.

The paſt might give me ſome room to hope ſucceſs for the future; but I would not truſt to a confidence which oftener deſtroys than ſaves, while diffidence is a wiſe preſerver, and the beſt defence of the weak. To ſtay till we are ſenſible of our frailty, is remaining too long. I was deſirous to prevent the ſenſe of it, and not run the hazard of being obliged to reproach myſelf for my own weakneſs.

Convinced that I was unhappy, I was, however, determined not to be criminal; and I could not hide from myſelf the danger to which my open and artleſs temper muſt expoſe me, when I had ſo deceitful and deſigning an adverſary. The conteſt was too unequal to venture; but it ſeemed to me as diſhonourable to attack the artleſs with arts and deceit, as to attempt the life of one who is not armed for his defence. I wondered at the ingratitude that could wiſh to turn a woman's affection into the means of making her wretched, and rob her of the pleaſure of being eſteemed, and of the heart-felt joy ariſing from the conſciouſneſs of deſerving to be ſo.

I was fixed in the reſolution of leaving my houſe, and of concealing myſelf from Lord Dorcheſter till I could contrive my return to my cottage, where I might ſeek for peace, and endeavour to forget a vicious race, whom I had known only to ſuffer by them. I thought it would not be ſafe to attempt this immediately, as I could not doubt but my lord would take all poſſible means of diſcovering my retreat; and, ſuſpecting my real intention, would more diligently watch the road. Where to conceal myſelf I knew not; but had no hopes of ſafety among thoſe who were acquainted with me. I had now learnt to diſtruſt every one, and my too fond heart found ſome reſource in believing no man was leſs an enemy to virtue than Lord Dorcheſter.

The following night I fixed for my elopement, with which I dared truſt nobody, but was to tranſact it without any guide or adviſer but reſolution and fear.

Lord Dorcheſter called ſeveral times in the morning; but I did not riſe till noon, in order to avoid ſeeing him till I had acquired a ſufficient compoſure of mind to enable me to converſe.

In the afternoon he came again as I expected: I feared his ſight, though he had more reaſon to fear mine. The guilty only have cauſe to tremble; but the great change which was to ſucceed this viſit, made it appear dreadful to me. I had endeavoured to practiſe ſome worldly arts: I thought it was ſtrange if I had lived ſo long here without acquiring the power of diſſimulation; I tried to conceal my grieved heart under a ſmiling countenance, that I might not either puzzle my lord, or give him room for ſuſpicion. But I had eſteemed my own abilities too highly; I was leſs improved than I could have wiſhed.

Lord Dorcheſter, at firſt coming in, addreſſed me with inexpreſſible tenderneſs and concern for my health. The variety of emotions from the joy I felt in the proofs of his affection, which would have made even ſickneſs delightful, with the pain that attended the thought of the bad deſigns it had given birth to, and yet how much I muſt ſuffer in relinquiſhing the greateſt happineſs of my life; overcame my reſolution, and brought ſuch a crowd of images to my mind, as drew a flood of tears from my eyes, which never ceaſed flowing for a quarter of an hour together, during the whole evening. My lord appeared greatly concerned at theſe ſigns of grief, and was importunate to know the reaſon of them. I could only attribute them to diſtemper; and, according to the faſhion of the place, complain of my ſpirits. This did not make him eaſy; he declared he could not forbear ſuſpecting ſome hidden cauſe; and, by the many aſſurances of his conſtant and increaſing affection with which he endeavoured to remove my melancholy, I perceived he imagined me a prey to jealous fancies. I was glad his thought took that turn; for I was in great fear that my weakneſs in thus ſhewing the ſituation of my mind, might have created better-grounded ſuſpicions; eſpecially at his going away, which was not till very late. I had not power to tell him it was time he ſhould leave me; and he was not inclined to make that diſcovery himſelf; but at laſt, the watchman forced him to obſerve the hour; and care of my health induced him to obey it's call to reſt. I was determined this ſhould be the laſt interview I would ever have with him. The thought that I ſhould never ſee him more, had ſo violent an effect on my depreſſed ſpirits, that, as ſoon as he was out of the room, I fainted away. I believe it was not long before I recovered my ſenſes. I found myſelf in his arms, and my maid rubbing

bing my temples, while he was holding a bottle for me to ſmell to. He had, as I afterwards learnt, returned on the noiſe I made in falling; and, finding me on the floor, called my maid to aſſiſt him in bringing me again to life. The joy I felt from the tenderneſs of his behaviour on my coming to myſelf, was ill ſuited to my intention. It was long before he would leave me; but the ſecond parting was not ſo bad as the firſt. To get quit of my maid, I was obliged to go to bed. As ſoon as ſhe was out of the room, I dreſſed myſelf anew, and ſat down to write to Lord Dorcheſter, to the following purpoſe.

'MY LORD,

'AS little as a man can deſerve to find a place in the thoughts of one on whom his views have been ſo ungenerous and low, yet I cannot forbear informing you, that a diſcovery of your baſe deſigns has rendered it neceſſary for me to fly you. Was my pride equal to my love, I ſhould be aſhamed that, in our laſt interviews, I diſcovered ſo much ſorrow in parting with one who never had any true affection for me. But why ſhould I bluſh at not ſuſpecting intentions in you, which I thought no heart had been bad enough to harbour? My own made me a dupe to the appearance of your's. It was not difficult for me to believe, that the generoſity, the tenderneſs, the eſteem, you appeared to have for me, were real. Though I deſerved little of it, it ſeemed to me leſs injurious to ſuppoſe you miſtaken than deceitful. The underſtanding of the wiſeſt man may err; but I did not imagine the heart of any one could be ſo corrupted. I own that, at this moment, I ſtill repay in real fondneſs all the arts you practiſe to make me believe it mutual. In the midſt of my reſentment, my love is as ſtrong as ever. I am ſenſible you have for ever deſtroyed my happineſs: I can never enjoy a moment's comfort abſent from you. The happy compoſure of my mind is turned into diſtraction; my conſtitution is not equal to the ſorrows that attack it. But this is not my grief. I am the creature of Providence, and muſt, without repining, wait it's decrees: if, without ingratitude, I might wiſh to loſe the life it has given me, I ſhould pray for death, as the deſirable end of a miſerable being. One effect I would gladly hope my ſufferings may have on you: let them ſhew you how wretched you aimed at making one who deſerved not to receive ſo much evil at your hands. Think what torment the ſucceſs of your vile arts muſt have given me; ſince, to avoid the chance of it, I can, without heſitation, reduce myſelf to ſo great a misfortune as leaving the joy of my life, your company. Let this deter you for the future, from leading others into the ſame unhappy circumſtances. I wiſh an amendment of your principles for your own benefit; for I feel a ſincere pity for the ignorance you muſt live in of the greateſt pleaſures; thoſe ariſing from a truly-affectionate, generous, pure, and honeſt heart. As for myſelf, it can no longer be of further conſequence to my peace: I ſhall not even know what paſſes here; I will not remain among a people to whom I am ſo ill ſuited. Opinion had raiſed you almoſt to a deity. Finding you fall ſo far below what even a human creature ſhould be, I cannot help doubting myſelf alſo; and therefore will never ſee you more. I will return to my little cottage, where I ſhall behold no actions but what are juſt and conſiſtent; where innocence is no temptation to vice, nor made a means towards the poſſeſſor's deſtruction. In that dear ſolitude my love will be repaid by affection, by the only worthy object of it, and our hearts united with ſincerity and truth. There I lived, bleſſed indeed in innocence; all that was dear to me within my ſight; I had nothing to regret, nothing to ſigh for, no thought, no wiſh, to ſuppreſs: actuated by virtue, with virtue alone I loved my ſingle friend; happy in knowing no more, I enjoyed a conſtant ſtate of contentment. Think, my lord, from what you have taken me, and what miſery you have brought on her who, notwithſtanding all diſtance, the impoſſibility of ſeeing you again, and the great reaſon ſhe has to hate you, muſt ever remain attached to you in the tendereſt manner! This is your doing! this the effect you call love! this the reward of mine! But why ſhould I reproach you, when I cannot reſent as I ought? I am too little miſtreſs of myſelf to write more. Heaven preſerve you! May you never feel remorſe enough to give you equal pain to that I endure! I would have

'you

pa. 112.

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'your heart improve by reaſon, and not 'by ſuffering. Once more accept my 'prayers, my beſt wiſhes: you are the 'only object I have for them, I myſelf 'excluded, ſince all I ought to wiſh for 'is a total forgetfulneſs of you; and if 'I cannot part with your image, miſery 'is attached to it. If you can help it, 'do not quite forget me; think of me 'as one who has ſuch an affection for 'you as in the great world cannot be 'equalled; think of me as anxious for 'your happineſs, while I am ſuffering 'by you, who could receive any evil by 'ſelf-condemnation rather than part with 'you, rather than once ſay "Adieu!" But 'it muſt be ſo! The God you have of-'fended, forgive and bleſs you!'

This letter was not written without torrents of tears, with which my paper was ſo blotted, that it was ſcarcely legible; but the interruptions my ſorrow gave, took up ſo much of the little time left me, that I had not leiſure to write it over again; and if I had, I might not have mended it. As ſoon as it was finiſhed, I laid it where I imagined it would be found, though not the firſt moment I was miſſing. I then put as much money in my pocket as I thought requiſite. Without ſcrupling to ſave myſelf at the expence of the perſon who had reduced me to the want of ſuch aſſiſtance, I took no more than I believed neceſſary; if I had, it would not have been ſo juſtifiable. I loaded myſelf with linen and other things that I might want, and could conveniently carry. The jewels, watches, trinkets, and every thing valuable, I put up with the money in my bureau, and incloſed the key of it in the letter to my lord. Grief purifies the heart. So much had it leſſened my vanity, that things which, in poſſeſſion, had given me a fooliſh pleaſure, were now of no more worth in my eyes than a piece of glaſs. By this time day began to dawn. I ſtole down ſtairs, and unbarring the ſtreet-door as gently as I could, I went out. I got through that, and the adjacent ſtreets, as quick as poſſible, and walked a great way, before people were ſtirring, without knowing where I was. I went into the firſt houſe where lodgings were to be let, and the people up, and hired a room, well ſatisfied with my ſituation, becauſe it was at a great diſtance from that I lately lived in, and from my lord's houſe. I learned I was in a part of the city, and took a back-room, that I might run no hazard of being ſeen from the ſtreet. The people where I lodged were quiet and civil, and too buſy to be very curious.

As ſoon as I had hired my chamber, I ſhut myſelf in it, and indulged my grief with greater freedom than I had yet ventured to do. The tears, which had only fallen gently down my face as I walked through the ſtreets, (for I could not confine them entirely) now came with double force, and did not ceaſe till I grew ſo weary with the agitation of my mind, want of reſt, and a walk far too long for my decayed ſtrength, that I fell aſleep for ſome hours.

This refreſhed my body, but could not relieve my heart; that remained the ſame, or rather acquired new ſtrength only to grieve with more violence.

I grew very ill by night, and kept my bed for two days. From that time my health began to mend, and I became ſomewhat more compoſed.

CHAP. XVI.

LORD Larborough had placed ſpies upon me, by which means he learnt the place of my abode, and came the day after my eſcape; but I was not able to ſee him till the latter end of that week, and was then but very unfit for company. He addreſſed me in the moſt affectionate manner, lamented my unhappy fate, and the unworthy hands into which I had fallen; applauded my reſolution in leaving Lord Dorcheſter, and admired my innocence. He ardently wiſhed he could have ſaved me from the impending danger which threatened me, without making my happineſs a ſacrifice to my virtue. 'You heard,' ſaid he, 'lovely 'Ophelia, how I endeavoured to ſhew 'my friend that he ought not to be averſe 'to marrying you. I had done much 'more at other times; I have repreſented 'to him the great charm of your inno-'cence, which ſhould preſerve itſelf by 'diſarming all bad deſigns. I proved 'to him an alliance with you could not 'hurt his pride, ſince it muſt do honour 'to a man of any rank. It could not ex-'cuſe the fears he expreſſed of matri-'mony, as your numerous virtues ſe-'cured him from every evil that can at-'tend the ſtate of wedlock. In point of 'intereſt, no man could be ſo bigotted 'to money as to think it comparable to

'your

'your worth. Others might bring him 'gold; you would make him poſſeſſor 'of more wealth, of a nobler kind of 'riches than Peru or Mexico could yield. 'Theſe are the arguments I have uſed 'to perſuade him to marry you. But 'his notions are ſo depraved, that all I 'could ſay made no impreſſion on his 'mind; indeed, it was vain to hope it 'would: if his love, and the faireſt 'miracle of virtue, could not diſpoſe him 'to juſtice, how ſhould my arguments 'have that power? They could not be ſo 'prevalent as every look, every word, 'and action, of the innocent Ophelia, 'muſt have been, to any one who had 'the ſmalleſt ſeeds of virtue in their 'breaſt: I ſhould have believed the moſt 'debauched man living could not have 'harboured a momentary thought againſt 'the virtue which appeared ſo amiable. 'Pardon me the blaſphemies I uttered 'againſt you in the converſation you 'overheard; they all agree with my real 'ſentiments; my heart bled for what 'you were ſuffering while I treated his 'opinion ſo highly: but I was obliged 'to put that force on myſelf, to make 'him more openly declare ſentiments 'which I would have given my life to 'have changed into ſuch as would have 'been agreeable to your wiſhes, and due 'to your merits. It was with the ut-'moſt difficulty I performed my taſk, 'and proſecuted a diſcourſe which tore 'my heart by friendly ſympathy with 'yours.'

This elaborate ſpeech of Lord Larborough's ſurprized me a little; it ſeemed ſo honeſt and affectionate, that, during ſome parts, I believed his diſpoſition was ſuitable to his expreſſions: but he mixed ſo much flattery with his panegyricks on my virtue, that I told him I hoped I had, indeed, enough to preſerve me from committing any criminal action. But where was the miracle of this? Thouſands would do the ſame. If it preſerved me from cenſure, I had all I could require from it; but I ſaw no reaſon to commend me ſo highly for having only done my duty, and that merely when one virtue was concerned: a ſmall portion to be proud of, when we ought to be poſſeſſed of ſo many! He could not have given me more praiſe, had I acted up to the laws of general perfection. In behaving differently from what I had done, I ſhould have been very criminal; but I could ſcarcely think myſelf quite juſtified, unleſs I had that proper love for virtue which would make me hate the former of vile ſchemes, as well as induce me to avoid him; whereas I had not arrived even at anger. Grief poſſeſſed my whole ſoul, and left no room for any other ſentiment. I ſtill loved to exceſs the man to whom I owed my ſufferings; and, while I fled from him, and reſolved never again to ſee him, I endeavoured to excuſe him, and blame only education and pernicious cuſtom, which had, by corrupting his principles, rendered me a moſt unhappy woman. My tears flowed almoſt inceſſantly; Lord Larborough joined in them, and wept too, till I grew convinced of the pure friendſhip he profeſſed. He frequently exclaimed againſt the baſeneſs of a man who could mean me ill; and, with all the appearance of ſincerity, declared how incapable he ſhould have been of ſuch behaviour, had he been bleſſed with my love: he would have adored me with a pure devotion, have looked on Hymen as his tutelar deity, and have eſteemed himſelf the happieſt of mankind, if I would have conferred an eternal obligation on him by becoming his wife.

Many more things he ſaid to raiſe his own character, and blacken Lord Dorcheſter's; which ſerved only to increaſe my affection, as I grieved as much for my lord's depravity as for my own ſufferings, independently of the connection between them.

All Lord Larborough ſaid was uttered with ſuch an air of tenderneſs, and mixed with ſo many expreſſions of fondneſs, that, at laſt, I began to think his ſentiments were beyond thoſe of friendſhip, which I thought I muſt deteſt in a country where people can be led by love to do actions ſo unworthy of themſelves, and ſo inconſiſtent with the reſt of their character. I was fully convinced of it, when, after finding fault with my lodging, and lamenting that I, who ought to receive the ſervices of mankind, (for he mixed the moſt fulſome flattery with every thing he ſaid) ſhould be void of neceſſary attendance and convenience, he ſolicited me to accompany him to one he would find out for me, where I ſhould be ſerved in a manner worthy of me, and all poſſible care taken to alleviate my grief, and aſſiſt time in conquering it. This propoſal ſtartled me. I told him that flattery was no means of pleaſing me. I looked on it in no better light than

than as an indirect accuſation of an inſufferable vanity and folly; ſince it ſhewed an expectation of being believed. That, in a country where benevolence and juſtice reigned, I might, indeed, expect ſo much of the ſervice of mankind as tended to that mutual defence due from all fellow-creatures to each other; but as here money only obtained that aſſiſtance which humanity ſhould give, I had little title to any, nor the leaſt occaſion for thoſe venal ſervices which I had been accuſtomed to perform for myſelf. If reaſon and proper indignation could not conquer my affliction, I feared it was beyond the power of any thing elſe to perform it: but that his lordſhip's offer ſurprized me; he ſeemed to have forgot that he was inviting me into a ſituation which I had learned from him was ſo unuſual in England, that it was always thought criminal. He replied, that he allowed the truth of what I alledged; but he would remove all objections from the malicious cenſures of mankind, by keeping every circumſtance concerning me ſo private, and ordering his own viſits ſo prudently, that no one ſhould have room to ſuſpect that I was not wholly miſtreſs of myſelf, and every thing belonging to me. I told him, that hitherto I had been only unfortunate: what imprudence I had been guilty of muſt be laid to the charge of unavoidable ignorance; but if I was to accept his offer, I ſhould eſteem myſelf greatly blameable. I thought it was wrong to act contrary to the cuſtoms of the people among whom we live, unleſs in contradiction to their vices. Want of concealment argued a degree of guilt; and, whether ariſing from vice, or only folly, it was our duty to avoid it. Nothing more was required to render me unhappy, than to be obliged to make a ſecret of my thoughts and actions. Beſides, I made no doubt but the ſuſpicious of mankind were founded on experience and probability, which was a ſufficient reaſon to induce me to avoid giving cauſe for them. That, in my opinion, a woman who did one imprudent thing premeditately, gave good grounds to ſuſpect her of more, and was guilty, at leaſt, of being the cauſe of all the untruths people thought and ſaid about her; which was a greater load than thoſe to have on my conſcience; that was determined to appear guiltleſs, as well as to be ſo; and therefore would continue where I was, or change only to ſome place of my own providing. He ſpent no ſmall time in endeavouring to perſuade me, that neceſſary concealments could be no pain to any one bleſſed with the conſciouſneſs of innocence. But I at laſt convinced him, that I would not conſent to it. It was with difficulty I prevailed on him to leave me to my own thoughts, though it was really late at night. I cannot ſay they were to his honour. The treachery I had diſcovered made me now as ſuſpicious as before I was the contrary, which muſt naturally tend to the diſadvantage of Lord Larborough, ſince nothing could give me more reaſon to believe he harboured ſome bad deſign, than his endeavours to draw me into a way of life of which he had told me the impropriety, when it ſerved to get me away from Lord Dorcheſter. Could I forbear ſuſpecting them of being equally culpable? It was happy for me that they were ſo; for, as I fear humanity would not have been of ſo much ſervice to me as Lord Larborough's jealouſy and deſire to get me into his power, I could not attribute what he had done to any other cauſe, ſince he could wiſh to lead me into part of the evil from which he had ſtrongly repreſented the neceſſity of my flying. I had reaſon, however, to thank Heaven that the bad intentions of one ill perſon thus ſaved me from the dangers threatened me by another, equally my enemy; and could not hate Lord Larborough for his ſentiments, ſince they turned ſo much to my benefit. But I feared I might find him ſome obſtruction to my departure; and without that addition I had too many impediments, and no one to aſſiſt me. I dared not truſt any body, and had a mind too ill at eaſe to take any meaſures for myſelf. I could only grieve for my misfortunes, incapable of forming a rational thought towards redreſſing them. How often, in my wiſhes for the friendly relief of Death, was I checked by the remembrance of my kind parent, the nurſe and inſtructor of my youth! But for the conſolation I hoped my preſence would afford her, the grave would have been my ſole deſire, for that alone I thought could bring me eaſe; but I preferred the ſuffering any evil to the increaſe of the pain I had already involuntarily given her; and this conſideration controuled my ardent wiſhes for it's kind hand.

When Lord Larborough found neither perſuaſion nor flattery could prevail upon

me to put myſelf into his power, he tried whether fear would not be more his friend. He peſtered me every day with his viſits, and invented new ſtories to alarm me. At one time he pretended Lord Dorcheſter had diſcovered where I was; and therefore thought his ſervice might not be unacceptable in procuring me ſome ſafer aſylum. But I told him, that, being leſs known in the town than his lordſhip, I could more ſecurely perform that office for myſelf; fully determined to conceal my new habitation with equal care from both. I gave orders to the people of the houſe to admit no one that wanted to ſee me; and tried every means to prevail on Lord Larborough to leave me, that I might ſeek another lodging; for in one reſpect he had ſucceeded, he had frighted me extremely. But, notwithſtanding my moſt preſſing entreaties, and a good deal of incivility, (for my patience was exhauſted) yet he would not go away till night; and then, finding no enquiry had been made after me, I was pretty well convinced the whole was his own invention.

Another day he informed me I had got into a houſe of ill repute, opening to me a ſcene of iniquity as appeared to me entirely incredible; and I frankly told him it was impoſſible there ſhould be ſuch monſters in the form of women as he repreſented: but I was, above all, ſure my landlady was not of that kind, the houſe being extremely quiet, ſhe having little company, no young perſon belonging to her; and beſides depending on a ſhop for her ſupport, which muſt render the infamous traffick he mentioned contrary to her intereſt, ſince it would put a ſtop to her lawful and honeſt trade.

I grew at length ſo diſguſted with a man who could endeavour to increaſe the agony of my mind, out of ſuch baſe views as theſe various falſhoods more and more convinced me actuated him, that I could ſcarcely endure his preſence. While I believed he expoſed Lord Dorcheſter's deſigns out of real humanity, I honoured him. Virtue is a man's firſt friend; and his regard for it is never put to a ſeverer trial than when it's intereſt claſhes with the ſchemes of thoſe whom he moſt loves; and therefore he who gives it it's true preference is greatly to be applauded. But Lord Larborough's motives made his behaviour treacherous; and the diſcovery of them turned all the gratitude I had at firſt felt towards him to Providence, who had a better right to it. To that was I indebted for my ſafety, which was ſecured by meeting with two men whoſe views were equally baſe, and both alike fixed on me. In the moments of my moſt exceſſive grief, I reflected on this as a bleſſing, and all my ſoul was filled with gratitude; when, otherwiſe, my wretchedneſs might have tempted me to an impious repining, that guiltleſs, and contrary to any voluntary ſteps of my own taking, I ſhould, by various degrees, be led to the miſery I endured.

I hoped that deſpair might at laſt incline Lord Larborough to aſſiſt me in any return to my cottage; but I had vainly flattered myſelf, he would not even give me any advice as to the manner I ſhould contrive it; and, inſtead of removing the difficulties that lay in my way, took a pleaſure in ſtarting new ones. All the benefit I reaped from a behaviour which he called ungrateful, was an abatement in the frequency of his viſits; and that, I confeſs, was ſome reward.

CHAP. XVII.

FOR a fortnight after I eſcaped from Lord Dorcheſter's, I had lived without ſeeing any one except Lord Larborough. But the people where I lodged, having as much pity for my melancholy as they had leiſure to feel, were at laſt ſo preſſing with me to drink tea with them, that I could no longer refuſe it, though I was not very fit for company.

They had been ſo obliging as to order their ſervant to admit nobody, in compliance with my deſire: but before we parted, by miſtake, ſhe brought in a viſitor, who, the maid knowing their regard to him, imagined it muſt be agreeable. It was ſo indeed to me; for it proved to be Mr. South.

His behaviour, when I was Mrs. Herner's priſoner, had created in me ſo much eſteem, that I often begged my lord to give him the firſt great living in his gift which ſhould prove vacant; and he had promiſed me he would do it.

As deſirous as I had been of remaining concealed, I could not be ſorry to ſee Mr. South. He ſeemed rejoiced to meet with me again, and aſked leave to wait on me the next morning; very much puzzled by the way I appeared in, as it differed greatly from the rank he imagined

gined me of, by things he heard after my leaving his neighbourhood. I was not without my reaſons for being glad to have ſome private converſation with him. I had ſufficient proof that he was fit to be truſted; and hoped, with his aſſiſtance, to get ſoon from London.

He had not been long with me before I communicated to him the difficulties of my ſituation; and told him, that although I had once rejected his friendly offers of contriving my eſcape, I ſhould now be highly indebted to him, if he would order my journey for me, in the way he thought moſt ſafe from diſcovery; that I hoped Lord Dorcheſter had taken for granted, that I was returned to my aunt before that time, and therefore would have no ſuſpicions of finding me on the road; but that, to prevent it more certainly, it might be beſt to go round by ſome country that did not lie directly in the way. He was greatly affected with my diſtreſs, and tried all the power of perſuaſion to compoſe my mind. He offered to go to Lord Dorcheſter, in order to learn whether the certainty of being unable to ſucceed in his intentions might not make him glad to marry me. But this I abſolutely refuſed: I had pride enough to think one with his principles did not deſerve me. But there were conſiderations of ſtill more weight. The account he gave of his averſion to marriage, and the impropriety of his own temper for that ſtate, gave a woman reaſon to fear ſhe might not be happy as his wife. I had already undergone the worſt part of the pains of ſeparation; it would have been very ſimple to ſubject myſelf to ſuffer it all over again, when, by living longer with him, my affection was ſtill increaſed; for, with all his faults, I ſaw him amiable beyond expreſſion. Beſides, as well as I loved him, I would not have turned beggar, no, not even for himſelf. What happineſs could I have expected from a love which I thought his actions proved was not founded on eſteem? Marriage would not make me ſee it in a different light, as I could not but know the fire of it aroſe in him merely from unovernable paſſion, not principle; and I juſt, therefore, always fear his repenting it, as he could not believe me more worthy of being for ever united to him than before I left him.

I was ſo poſitive in the point, that Mr. Smith did not at all inſiſt on the execution of his offer; but, on the contrary, commended my ſpirit, and appeared extremely pleaſed with it: the reaſon of which I did not find out till the next day; and then admired the generoſity of his mind, in having been ſo ready to undertake an office wherein he certainly could not wiſh to be employed.

In the ſecond viſit, he begged I would forgive his renewing the offer I had once refuſed of the whole ſervice of his life and fortune. He preſſed it in the genteeleſt and tendereſt manner imaginable. I told him I was very ſorry he had ſtill a wiſh depending on me which I could not grant; but that I was abſolute in my determination to return to my aunt, and on no account could think of marrying a man whom I did not love better than any other in the world. He replied, that he knew his misfortune in that reſpect; but would never repine at it, if I would but grant him the ſecond place in my eſteem, and give an opportunity to his ſincere affection, to make him, in time, happy in the poſſeſſion of my heart. He added, that the delicacy which made me averſe to marriage in the preſent ſituation of my mind, was a ſufficient aſſurance that, if I was married to him, I would join my endeavours to his to get the better of a love which my principles would not ſuffer me to encourage: he would wait thoſe happy effects with patience, and with gratitude acknowledge the preſent bleſſing of being united to me; which he ſhould prefer to the poſſeſſion of the whole heart of any other woman. In this manner did he importune me long, and very reluctantly believed that I was immoveable on this ſubject. I grieved to afflict him: but what could I do? I could not marry him; it was better, therefore, to repreſs his hopes at once. This topick made him ſo little fit for other converſation, that, during this viſit, I got no intelligence with regard to my leaving London.

The next day he ſeemed eaſier than when he left me, and agreed to aſſiſt me as expeditiouſly as poſſible. We determined that I ſhould take a coach to myſelf, and go through Northamptonſhire into Oxfordſhire, and then ſtrike into the weſtern road: and he promiſed that the day following he would ſeek for one. I wiſhed him leſs ſlow in procuring the means of my departure: could I have tranſacted it myſelf, I ſhould have proceeded with more haſte. If an unhappy perſon could be ſo inhuman as to receive

comfort from perceiving others were so as well as herself, I might have found some consolation the next morning from a scene to which I was witness. I happened by chance to be in a little room belonging to the people of the house, that had a door and a window into the shop. I saw a very pretty lady making some purchase there, when at once I heard her scream; and a gentleman, whose face I could not see, express great satisfaction at meeting her. Her surprize gave him time to reproach her for having so long avoided him, refusing both his visits and his letters, denying him all opportunity of justifying himself for an event in which she must acknowledge he was not to blame. She struggled to get from him, and begged he would let her go; but he held her hand so fast, that she was obliged to hear him protest the most violent passion, and assure her that he had taken all proper measures to bring her to the appointed place, but had been strangely disappointed in having another lady brought instead of her.

Your ladyship may imagine, that one whose heart like mine was filled with love, would be attentive to any thing that had the least relation to it; but I became still more so on what the gentleman said. By her endeavours to get from him, I at last saw his face, and perceived it was the person to whom I had been carried in my way to London.

The lady declared she would raise an outcry if he did not go farther from her, and leave her at liberty. My landlady then spoke very sternly, and desired he would not trouble any one in her shop, but let the lady alone. He no sooner let go her hand, than she ran to the street-door, but was stopped by his placing himself between her and it. When she found an attempt to get from him that way was vain, she turned short, and seeing the door which opened into the room where I was, she sprung with such force against it, that, not shutting very well, she broke it open, and had bolted it on the inside before her lover could reach it.

Seeing me, she begged I would protect her, and keep her from that man. I carried her up stairs into my apartment, the door of which I fastened, and left the gentleman to the disposal of my landlady. The poor lady was no sooner eased of part of her fear, than she fell into a fit, which greatly alarmed me; but I durst not open the door to call any one. When she came to herself, she burst into tears. Her case in some degree resembled mine, which made me accompany her in weeping.

She begged me again not to let the man from whom she had fled come up stairs. I told her I had once ignorantly been her protector, and that now I would be so designedly. I then informed her that I was the person who had been carried to his lordship's house when he expected her, and gave her an account of my reception, and what succeeded it.

She seemed to receive some satisfaction from finding herself with one who knew some part of her history, but expressed her astonishment at seeing me in such an habitation, having, as she said, understood that I was a relation of Lord Dorchester, and, from the disturbance he had been in, she could suppose no other; and yet the place in which I now lived was not at all proper for any of his family.

So many circumstances in what either said touched some tender part of the other's heart, that more was expressed by tears than by words. They were the only answers I made to her expressions of surprize, till I found she misconstrued them, by her telling me that she feared Lord Dorchester was not proof against pride and beauty, which, together, made men do very wrong things. She had had a better opinion of his lordship; his behaviour to her deserved eternal gratitude; but she was afraid I had not an equal obligation to him. She assured me she pitied me sincerely; for that my youth, and the very great amiableness of his lordship, were strong excuses, if I observed a different behaviour for the future, offering me any kind of assistance in her power, and exhorting me to a regular life. These suspicions raised my indignation; I could not forbear answering with great warmth that her opinion injured me greatly, and it was cruel by such an imputation, to add to the affliction I was under.

She begged my pardon in the handsomest manner, made all kinds of submissions, and excused herself so well on the probability of the thing, that I forgave her, and complied with her request in relating to her, in as few words as possible, the occasion of the difference she saw in my situation. She shewed a very real compassion for me, and offered to take me home with her to her aunt's

where they would carefully conceal me. But I entreated her not even to mention me to that relation, as it muſt redound to my lord's diſhonour; and I thought myſelf ſo ſafe where I was, that it would not be adviſeable to change my abode. Her fear leſt her lover ſhould have ſet ſpies at our door, made her glad to remain the whole day with me; during which I learnt that her father had faithfully kept the agreement made with him by Lord Dorcheſter, and her aunt had behaved very kindly to her; but that ſhe had been obliged to make herſelf an abſolute priſoner ever ſince ſhe came to town, having never been able to venture into any publick place, or large company, for fear of meeting that vile man from whom ſhe had been ſo fortunately delivered. Not, ſhe added, that ſhe apprehended any other harm from ſeeing him in publick, but the keeping alive a paſſion which it was neceſſary to her peace to extinguiſh. She owned ſhe had not been able to do it, which made her extremely unhappy, and had occaſioned her ſuffering exceſſively during that interview between them to which I had been a witneſs.

Her lover omitted no means of ſeeing or writing to her, after he found where ſhe was gone. He attempted to viſit her continually, but always received a denial at the door; he contrived a thouſand ways to convey letters to her; he often had them directed by other people, in hopes that, not knowing the hand, ſhe would open them; but being conſtantly on her guard, ſhe never read one, though, for any thing ſhe knew, ſome of them might be from other people; but the only means ſhe had of certainly avoiding to receive his letters, was to accept none but ſuch as were in the hands of her uſual correſpondents. Her care had anſwered ſo well, that ſhe never before met him.

It was plain from his diſcourſe that he imagined her behaviour proceeded from reſentment at not having been carried to his houſe. I found ſhe was as weak as myſelf; ſhe was ſtill very much in love with him, and appeared extremely unhappy, though ſhe ſaid ſhe was grown eaſier before this unlucky interview. She told me her intention was to perſuade her aunt to live in the country; where ſhe hoped, by abſence and reaſon, to cure this unfortunate paſſion. For ſhe took no joy in ſociety; nor did it afford the leaſt relief to her ſpirits. 'I 'once,' added ſhe, 'by chance met his 'wife, who ſeemed not leſs unhappy 'than myſelf, and I felt almoſt equal 'pity for her. Inſtead of looking on 'her with the diſlike generally borne to 'a rival, I conceived a kind of love for 'her as a fellow-ſufferer; and could not 'forgive myſelf for having, perhaps, 'been a means of creating part of the 'uneaſineſs which appeared in her countenance, though I had innocently offended her, her lord being the cruel injurer of both.'

By enquiring into his character, ſhe learnt that his lady was a woman of very great fortune, whom he married in little more than a year before he came into her father's neighbourhood, having gained her affections by a very aſſiduous courtſhip, to which her riches alone had tempted him.

The ſimilitude between this young lady's fate and mine, diſpoſed us well towards each other, and, before we parted, we ſhould have been glad to have agreed on a means of meeting again; but I dared not venture to her end of the town, nor could ſhe come where I was, without danger of meeting the man ſhe wiſhed to avoid, as he might probably hope that a love ſo tender as he knew her's once was, would, when her firſt anger was abated, relent on what he had ſaid, and that ſhe would come again where ſhe might hope another time to ſee him. Theſe conſiderations obliged us to take a final leave; only ſhe inſiſted on my informing her by a line when I ſhould be got ſafely out of town, which ſhe adviſed me to attempt cautiouſly, but reſolutely, though ſhe owned ſhe was ſorry Lord Dorcheſter ſhould have any cauſe to grieve; for notwithſtanding his having acted an unworthy part, yet her gratitude for the great benefit he had conferred on her, made her wiſh him not to ſuffer by it; adding, that I muſt allow this was due to one who had preſerved her from being the unhapieſt wretch on earth; but yet ſhe ſhould be very ſorry that he ſhould commit a wrong action, who had deſerved ſo much honour from having prevented another from doing one. We exchanged mutual good wiſhes, and parted.

How much are the orders of Providence perverted! Our affections ſeemed given as the ſources of happineſs; but, by the bad qualities of mankind, are frequently

quently made the great ſprings of our miſery. While they correſpond with virtue, they alone give us a notion of true bliſs; but when once they are connected with various kinds of vice, how wretched do they make both the vicious perſon and thoſe who are the objects of their ill-founded affections!

CHAP. XVIII.

THE next morning, when Mr. South went to hire an equipage for me, as he had promiſed, he perceived a man fauntering in the inn-yard, who obſerved him while he was making the bargain, and followed him at a diſtance at his return. Mr. South, fearing it might be ſome ſpy of Lord Dorcheſter's, went home, inſtead of coming to me. He learnt of the people of the houſe where he lodged, that, after he was gone in, the man enquired his name, and ſome other particulars. He was ſo cautious leſt the place of my abode ſhould be diſcovered through his means, that he would not ſtir out of his lodgings till the following day; but he had not been long with me, before the ſame perſon came after him, having been directed from his houſe with a meſſage from Lord Dorcheſter, deſiring to ſpeak with him then, if he was at leiſure. This ſurprized us, as they had not the leaſt acquaintance; and made us ſuſpect that, upon laying circumſtances together, his lordſhip thought Mr. South might be able to give him ſome information about me.

I was deſirous of moving my habitation directly, that he might be able to ſay with truth he knew not where I was: but he differed from me in this; he ſaid that Lord Dorcheſter had no power over me, nor could a man of honour attempt to uſe force to prevent my purſuing my intended journey; that he would take care I ſhould have the liberty of a free-born woman, and not be detained by any one. If his lordſhip kept ſo ſtrict a watch, I ſhould ſcarcely be able to get off undiſcovered, and therefore it was better to do it openly and boldly; offering to ſee me ſafe to the end of my journey. As his profeſſion obliged him to ſome dependence on the favour of thoſe who could aſſiſt in his preferment; and as I hoped Lord Dorcheſter would perform the promiſe he had given me, I rejected this propoſal, very unwilling to do him an injury in return for the obligations he had conferred on me, by thus neglecting his own intereſt for my good. He replied, that he could never receive ſo much true ſatisfaction from any thing as from doing me ſervice; that he ſhould have only this one opportunity of enjoying ſo great a gratification, which, if I could not be prevailed with to make him happy, would be always reflected on by him as the darling moment of his life; and that it would be the higheſt cruelty to refuſe the acceptance of his beſt ſervices, the recollection of which would ſweeten all his future cares or pains; and, as I could give but a very imperfect account of the place from which I had been taken, he could not venture me with any other guide than himſelf. He left me without waiting for an anſwer.

His reſolution diſtreſſed me; I could not bear to be detrimental to his intereſts, though I was convinced that with truth he ſaid they weighed leſs with him than the pleaſure of doing one friendly action: but ſuch generoſity ſhould meet with an equal return; nevertheleſs, I would not in this have given way to him could I have avoided it, but his abſence robbed me of the power of reſiſting his kind intention; and, indeed, the difficulty of finding out the place to which I was to be carried, from the very imperfect hints I could give, was ſo great, that there was ſome danger that none but ſo very aſſiduous a friend would have taken the pains to have ſought it out, which he intended to have done while I remained on the borders of Wales, till he could direct the vehicle in the right courſe. I was impatient to know the occaſion of Lord Dorcheſter's ſending for him, and yet it ſhould have ſeemed of little importance to me. My departure was determined. If he would have fixed me out of his power, and complied with my terms, which the cenſorioufneſs of this country, founded on the diſſolute manners of the people, would have required to make me acknowledged as innocent as I was, I would not have ſtaid. I could not accept an obligation which I never would return. The cuſtoms of mankind, and the different opinion I had of my lord to what I formerly entertained, rendered it impoſſible for me to live with the ſame frequent intercourſe, and perfect confidence, which till then had

had been the ſource of all my joys. Without that, what charms could any place have for me? The more I reflected, the ſtronger was my reſolution to fly it as I would the peſtilence, leſt the contagion ſhould reach me, and I be infected with their immorality.

While I was in the midſt of theſe reflections, I heard ſome one coming up ſtairs to my room. Full of expectation of Mr. South, I ran to the door to meet him; but how great was my ſurprize at ſeeing, inſtead of him, Lord Dorcheſter! I cried out, and ſunk into a chair, my ſtrength failing me. He was in too great a rapture to think of the effect his ſudden appearance had on me. How far above deſcription were his tranſports on ſeeing me again! He embraced me with an eagerneſs which, however innocent I once thought it, his own words had inſtructed me too well to ſuffer; and the deſire of repelling the familiarity, I believe, recovered me ſooner than I ſhould otherwiſe had been. All he ſaid were incoherent, paſſionate expreſſions of his joy. My ſenſations were more ſilent; I was as unable to ſpeak as he was to preſerve any regularity in what he ſaid. Love, reſentment, grief, and fear, divided my heart; each alike ſtrove for utterance, and therefore rendered me dumb, till he cried—'Speak to me, my 'charmer! my angel, ſpeak! No words 'can be ſo cruel as this ſilence. Your 'voice muſt delight, whatever ſubject 'you chuſe: but let it not be a harſh one; 'pity and forgive a man whoſe whole 'bliſs is centered in you. Will you, can 'you, pardon me?'

'Can my forgiveneſs be of any worth,' I replied, 'to one who could long harbour a wiſh to make me ſo criminal, 'that I could not have pardoned myſelf? 'If it was of value, why would you deſire to rob me of it, to whom it muſt 'be of moſt conſequence?'

'Upbraid me not,' anſwered he, 'with 'errors that make me wretched. If you 'knew how much I deſerve your pity, 'forgiveneſs muſt ſucceed your compaſſion. All my life muſt be devoted 'to extenuate my offence. Actions proceeding from the trueſt, the pureſt love, 'ſhall plead the excuſe of my injurious 'deſigns; believe my word, I have never 'broken it: I will not riſe from your 'feet, till you aſſure me of your pardon.'

—'Riſe then, now, my lord,' ſaid I. 'Anger maintains much ſhorter poſſeſſion of my mind than grief: I can ſuffer, but not reſent. From my heart 'I forgive all the miſery you have inflicted, and the greater ſtill which you 'intended me. I forgive you your conſtant endeavours to create a love in me 'which could only tend to my unhappineſs. I will not exclude even this 'laſt pain, this interview, which tears 'my heart: it is your inflicting, and 'therefore I will receive it with patience; 'but I had hoped to be ſettled in peace, 'without undergoing any new conflicts. 'I would not have troubled you in the 'ſearch of tranquillity; a bleſſing hard 'to find, for a heart ſo fond, ſo tender 'as mine; one that is by you taught all 'the anguiſh that the higheſt degree of 'ſenſibility can give. It was before I 'knew you in the entire poſſeſſion of reſt 'and peace, had no wiſh ungratified, no 'fear, no jarring paſſions to torment it. 'This dreadful change, I pardon you; 'and while I am ſeeking in my ſolitude 'for my former eaſe, I will pray for 'your felicity; and tears ſhall waſh away 'all reſentment. I might be happy if 'they could drown remembrance too!'

Tears eaſed the rack I was upon, and gave my lord time to deſire me not to talk of returning to my cottage; for it was uniting death with the healing ſound of pardon. 'If you love me,' continued he, 'can you wiſh for ſuch a ſeparation? 'You have now no reaſon to fly me: I 'have no concealed deſign. I was, indeed, greatly prejudiced againſt marriage; but you have removed it all. I 'now look on it as a ſtate of bliſs, if you 'are my companion in it, and pray for 'it more devoutly than ever martyr did 'for Heaven. Indeed, I have had my 'martyrdom: no tyrant could inflict a 'torment beyond what your abſence has 'made me ſuffer. What bitter accuſations have I not made againſt myſelf, 'for permitting prejudice to get the better of the trueſt love that ever poſſeſſed 'the heart of man. If you are only indifferent, mere pity will move you to 'comply. If you do not hate me, you 'will conſent to become my dear, my 'wedded wife, directly; you will relieve 'my mind from it's preſent ſufferings; 'and put it in my power to make what 'recompence I can for the trouble I have 'cauſed you.'

'That I love you,' I replied, 'I am 'much too well convinced by painful 'experience; but you have ſo forfeited

'my

my eſteem, that I cannot comply with your propoſal. I could not be happy if I was married to you; conſequently ſhould not make you ſo. Your paſſion for me is the ſame it was: all the difference is in the companions of it. While accompanied by hope, you know how little I was obliged to you for it; now deſpair has taken it's place, it has blinded you; and I will believe you think your affection all you ſay it is: but was your deſpair to ceaſe, you would find your miſtake too late, after we were both made ſacrifices to the deception. I have loſt all my confidence in you, and deteſt the reſt of your nation. I will go where I ſhall be ſecluded from mankind, where virtue makes every action open and intelligible: there I am capable of living happily, without learning the arts that here hide every real thought. If this reſolution is painful to you, make it likewiſe beneficial: truſt me, ſo corrupt a people cannot be taught virtue but by ſuffering. Affliction will purify a heart perverted by education and cuſtom; it takes off the varniſh from glaring vices, and ſhews them in their own dark colours. If you really ſuffer, conſider to what it is owing; learn to hate vice, which as certainly carries it's puniſhment, as virtue does it's reward along with it. But why ſhould I think you can ſuffer long enough to do any good? Your heart is not made like mine; therefore I cannot judge of it.'—'Can you,' cried my lord, 'kindly ſhed theſe tears to part with me, and yet accompany them with ſo cruel a declaration of your intention?' He omitted nothing that he thought could prevail with me; and ſo far did he ſucceed, that, had I known how much I ſhould have been affected, I would not have ſtaid to hear him; for I could not have believed my reaſon ſtrong enough to reſiſt my own agitation of mind, and the diſtraction he appeared in. He ſaw my diſtreſs; but, receiving hope from it, cruelly continued his perſuaſions. I would have left him, but he held me faſt, proteſting he would never let me go till I promiſed to be his wife. He offered me the diſpoſal of half his fortune, to make me leſs dependent; but, when our eaſe of heart depends ſo entirely on another's love, what freedom can money give us?

I know not whether I could for ever have refuſed to comply; but, happily for me, his reaſon failed him before he had ſufficiently conquered mine to get my conſent: his ſpirits were ſo oppreſſed, he became quite ſpeechleſs, and almoſt ſenſeleſs. I was half diſtracted; but, as ſoon as he began to come out of this fit, to avoid prolonging a ſcene ſo difficult for me to ſupport, I left the room, though not without taking a kinder farewel than ſeemed conſiſtent with a deſire never to ſee him again, which I begged, while with tears I kiſſed his hand. He had only power to look up at me with dying eyes, ſwimming in tears. Thus I left him: but, how hard it was to do ſo, none can know, but thoſe who have loved as well, and gone through as ſevere a trial.

I ſhut myſelf into another room, there to give way to the diſtraction of my mind, which was ſo exceſſive, that, when Mr. South came, I was not capable of attending or ſpeaking to him. He was greatly touched, and endeavoured to ſoothe and compoſe me; but, finding it impoſſible, he went away, unable to ſupport the ſight of me in that diſtreſs. The next time Mr. South came, he found me more capable of hearing what had paſſed after Lord Dorcheſter ſent for him.

He told me that my lord was waiting for him; and, as ſoon as the ſervant introduced him, aſked, with the utmoſt impatience, if he could impart any news of Miſs Lenox. Mr. South expreſſed ſome ſurprize at his lordſhip's applying to him, who alledged for the reaſon of it, the knowledge of the regard he had for me, and the reaſon I had to place a confidence in him, which made him appear the propereſt perſon to whom I could have recourſe in a ſituation where, without the aſſiſtance of one more accuſtomed to the world, it muſt be very difficult to conduct myſelf. That this probability was turned into almoſt a certainty, by the account of one of the people whom he had in pay at every place in town where equipages were to be hired, to prevent my getting away from it without his knowledge. This man told him, he had ſeen a clergyman hire a chariot, which he had looked at, and ſeemed to prefer to the reſt, for having canvaſſes to let down before the glaſſes: at leaſt, he could gueſs no other reaſon for the preference he gave it, as it was rather the worſt vehicle there: that upon this, his ſpy followed him to his lodgings, and learnt his name. My lord then, in the moſt affecting terms, conjured Mr. South to tell him where I was.

He anſwered, that he did not know, though

though he was obliged to Chance for finding me out; but he muſt beg to be excuſed giving an information that might make a reſolution more difficult to execute, which was already almoſt too hard for a woman who, except virtue, loved nothing ſo well as his lordſhip.

My lord ſaid, he hoped they were not inconſiſtent: he would not have aſked him for any information of which he deſigned to make a bad uſe. He had no other wiſh but to marry me, and wanted to ſee me to obtain my conſent, together with my forgiveneſs for what was paſt; and hoped it might be gained, as he had only mentally offended, and would devote his life to make me reparation. He added, that he could not live without me, and ſhould gratefully receive me on my own terms, if I pleaſed, that very day; for no time was early enough for his impatience.

Mr. South offered to come and tell me his preſent ſentiments; but my lord begged he might not defer ſeeing me; and prevailed on him to direct him where to find me.

After Lord Dorcheſter left me, he ſent again for Mr. South, who found him in a way, that the deſcription alone moved my heart too much at. He begged Mr. South's aſſiſtance in his endeavours to prevail on me to deſiſt from my purpoſe of never ſeeing him again.

Mr. South promiſed he would give it him; but added, that if my love for his lordſhip could not prevail, he feared all other advocates would prove very weak: that, if I was able to perſiſt in my reſolution, notwithſtanding the diſtreſs I ſaw him in, in the interview which he imagined would have ended in our union, he did not flatter himſelf he could make me change it.

I told him he had undertaken an unſucceſsful cauſe; that his expectations of the little he ſhould be able to effect were ſo well founded, I need give no other reaſons to perſuade him to deſiſt from a perſecution with which, however obſtinately I had determined not to comply, yet to reſiſt was very painful to me.

That I might be removed from theſe ſolicitations to my intended departure, which I feared would grow too ſtrong for my reſolution, I deſired Mr. South would procure me an equipage for the next day, without imparting to my lord the ſuddenneſs of my determination. He promiſed to fulfil my requeſt. I wiſhed myſelf in ſome place where my lord could not find me; for I feared I ſhould not be proof againſt another interview, though I was fortified by the full belief, that I could not be happy with one ſo defective in his principles, on the goodneſs of which muſt depend the felicity of all thoſe ſmall ſocieties, as eſteem is a neceſſary foundation for a laſting love. I could not believe this change in him aroſe from an amendment of heart, but from deſpair of ſucceſs in his former ſchemes; and was convinced it would therefore be madneſs to unite myſelf for life with one who had no better motive; for no ſuffering can be equal to that of being married to a man of whom one has a bad opinion.

As ſoon as Mr. South had reported his ſmall ſucceſs, Lady Paleſtine was ſent by my lord, to try whether ſhe could prevail. Your ladyſhip may imagine I did not give her a very cordial reception. She took no notice of it, but addreſſed me with fondneſs, and began to combat my intention, by ſetting before me all the happineſs that attended my conſent to marry my lord. Inſtead of endeavouring to excuſe his faults, ſhe only ſaid ſlightly, that no other man would have preſerved ſo blameleſs a behaviour, and proceeded to ſhew an union with him in the moſt pleaſing light. Her aim was to bring my affections to her ſide of the argument.

I did not let her go on long, but told her, it well became one who could condeſcend to connive at, and aſſiſt ſuch villainous deſigns as had been harboured againſt me, to endeavour to prevail by the force of paſſion, againſt the reaſon which ought to ſubdue it; but that I was not to be moved by arguments ſo wrongly applied, and uttered by one from whom every thing muſt appear in a ſuſpicious light, and who would diſgrace even the cauſe of virtue by defending it. Without ſaying much more, I affronted her, and freed myſelf from her importunities.

Lord Dorcheſter came ſoon after; but I heard a coach ſtop, and fearing it was him, hid myſelf ſo well, that though the houſe was diligently ſearched, they could not find me. After that he ſent me a letter; but I did not chuſe to give him more arms againſt myſelf; ſo ſent it back, with a deſire he would leave me in peace.

Before I had time to compoſe my ſpirits, Miſs Baden was brought up ſtairs. I was greatly ſurprized to ſee her; but, my heart was ſo great a ſtranger to pleaſure, that I could not find words to expreſs

preſs what I felt in her viſit, ſo ſoon as ſhe did the occaſion of it. 'I am come,' ſaid ſhe, 'to plead a cauſe, in which I 'find ſo many others have been unſuc-'ceſsful, that, although to be employed 'might raiſe my vanity, it ought to create 'fears in me, that all my endeavours 'will prove fruitleſs. My regard for 'you, the pleaſure I have always ima-'gined I muſt find in your friendſhip, 'and pity for one whoſe diſtreſs would 'move a harder heart than mine, makes 'me wiſh for eloquence enough to pro-'vail in my ſuit.' She proceeded to tell me, that ſhe had had a viſit from Lord Dorcheſter. As ſoon as he came in, he told her, that though he had never before had the honour of waiting on her, yet he truſted in her good nature for his pardon, when ſhe knew that he had placed all hopes of the happineſs of his life in her.

He related to her every thing that had paſſed between him and me, from the time of his firſt ſeeing me, till his laſt trial by Lady Paleſtine, of prevailing on me to lay aſide my intention of returning to my aunt. He added, that he knew I had a good opinion of her; and he had never ſeen ſo ſtrong an inclination in me to any other perſon; he therefore hoped ſhe might be more ſucceſsful, if ſhe would kindly undertake his cauſe.

I told her it was a bad one, and I wondered ſhe would engage in it. She replied, that I ought not to expect conſummate virtue among a degenerate people; that it was ſcarcely poſſible to find a man who had any ſcruples in regard to his behaviour to women. She gave me a thouſand inſtances wherein the men of the beſt characters had failed; telling me, they eſteemed matrimony as ſo entirely a political inſtitution, that though each might approve of it in ſociety, many did not like it for themſelves: that they looked on the life of a woman who lived with them without being married, as generally moſt happy; that my lord, in the care he had taken of my reputation, had ſhewn a delicacy and an affection for me, of which few men were capable; that, in every other virtue, he was as nearly perfect as a human creature could be. She told me how much I ought to allow for the force of cuſtom and education: theſe had both tended to make him look on chaſtity as a very ſmall virtue; for that it was even made the ſubject of ridicule in ſuch men as were poſſeſſed of it.

In ſhort, ſhe ſaid ſo much in his excuſe, that although I could not allow that cuſtom ſhould ſo far overcome truth, I found ſome ſatisfaction in finding him leſs criminal, but ſtill ſaw him too much ſo, not to reſiſt all her importunities; and ſhe was obliged to ſubmit to my obſtinacy.

I ſhould be deficient in ſincerity, were I not to confeſs that Miſs Baden's perſuaſions a little ſtaggered my reſolution. I ſometimes was inclined to doubt whether Lord Dorcheſter could be ſo much to blame, ſince ſhe undertook to excuſe him; and whether I might not be allowed to forgive one I loved ſo tenderly; ſince a woman who had no ſuch motive could ſo eaſily acquit him. But I ſoon became ſenſible this was the dictate of my paſſion. Bad examples, and pernicious habits, had in a great degree perverted Miſs Baden; the frequency of vice had deadened her ſenſe of it. But I had no ſuch excuſe; cuſtom had not confounded my ideas of right and wrong; and therefore, to have united myſelf with a perſon whom I knew guilty of vice, was, in a degree, to become vicious; and I could not have a ſtronger reaſon to avoid it than Miſs Baden herſelf furniſhed me with; for ſince a woman of virtue could, by example, have her principles ſo much perverted, the danger I ſhould run by marrying Lord Dorcheſter was obvious; and, to put ourſelves in a ſituation that muſt hazard our integrity, is a great proof that it is not at that time ſufficiently ſtrong. I very frankly told Miſs Baden, how much more prevalent I found her example than her arguments; for that ſhe could urge no reaſons which would ſo ſtrongly induce me to live with Lord Dorcheſter, as her being capable of urging them would deter me from it; ſince ſhe thereby ſhewed me the danger that aroſe from a communication with mankind; for I ſhould fear that my principles might be corrupted by the ſame means that had perverted her's. Therefore all ſhe could ſay only proved to me the neceſſity of flying mankind, if I deſigned to hold faſt my integrity as long as I lived.

Miſs Baden ſmiled, without any appearance of reſentment at what I had ſaid, and only anſwered, that ſhe ſaw I was determined to make no difference between excuſing the guilt of others, and accompanying them in the crime; and, ſince I was reſolved to retire from the world, it

order to avoid becoming as bad as ſhe was, ſhe found ſhe had little chance of carrying back any conſolation to Lord Dorcheſter: and the night being far ſpent, ſhe took leave of me.

CHAP. XIX.

MY mind had been too much agitated in the day to allow me any reſt at night. The various attacks that had been made on my paſſions had coſt my reaſon ſo much labour to reſiſt, that I had not ſtrength enough to compoſe my ſpirits, which, when Mr. South attended me the next morning, were in a ſtate little different from what they were when he left me the day before. He imagined night would afford me but little relief; and therefore came the earlier, out of a kind deſire to divert my thoughts, if he could not alleviate my uneaſineſs.

Before the hour the chariot was ordered, a letter was brought, which, I perceived by the ſuperſcription, was from Lord Dorcheſter. The firſt impulſe was to return it unopened, to avoid giving freſh pain to my heart; but, before I could put the thought in execution, it gave place to a tenderer conſideration. I feared by ſuch a proceeding I might add to his uneaſineſs; and this in a point that could do me no eſſential harm, was ungenerouſly preferring my own eaſe to his; and, ſince I was juſt going to execute a reſolution which affected him ſo much, it would be cruel to increaſe it unneceſſarily. I therefore opened the letter; and, to my great ſurprize, learnt from it, that he left London before break of day, in order to proceed directly to my aunt's; having hopes of obtaining her mediation in his favour, which he flattered himſelf might have more weight than any other perſon's had yet had.

Nothing could have filled me with greater aſtoniſhment. To expect ſo good a woman ſhould plead in the excuſe of vice, appeared to me extremely abſurd: but the conſequence of this ſtep was the preventing my journey; ſince, had I proceeded it, I muſt have met him on the road, or found him there; neither of which would have been at all agreeable to my purpoſe. The beſt ſcheme I could now form, was to leave my lodging before he could return to town, and remove into ſome obſcure houſe in the ſuburbs: and that as ſoon as Mr. South, who kindly undertook this additional trouble, could learn that he was come back, I ſhould ſet out directly on my journey. We were not without hopes, that, as my lord had taken his uſual retinue with him, the perſon employed to watch his arrival in London might learn ſome particulars of the ſituation of my aunt's houſe, that would ſerve to direct us, and ſave a very difficult, and perhaps a very tedious ſearch after it.

My travelling equipage was ſent away, and every thing ſettled for my continuance at my lodging, till I imagined Lord Dorcheſter might be coming back; for I liked the people of the houſe too well to leave them while I could avoid it. Their humanity endeared them to me: they had gathered ſo much light into my ſituation, by circumſtances that had fallen within their obſervation, that I thought myſelf obliged to acquaint them with a little more, leſt they ſhould have received impreſſions that might make them diſcontented with my continuing in their houſe. This Mr. South performed; and though he told them very few particulars, yet their good-nature appeared very conſpicuouſly on the occaſion, and their greateſt wiſh was to amuſe me. But in this they could not ſucceed ſo eaſily, as in making their houſe perfectly convenient. To relieve the anxiety of my mind was reſerved for others; who, for the time they were with me, did it effectually, and inſpired me with a joy which, on my own account, I could not have felt.

Sir Charles Liſdale came to town two days after Lord Dorcheſter left it; and not finding his lordſhip, went to Lady Paleſtine's, where he heard my whole hiſtory; and, deſirous of ſeeing me, was directed by her to my lodging.

Sir Charles came directly to my lodging; and ſending up his name, aſked leave to wait on me; a permiſſion I readily granted: and he was brought up ſtairs with a young lady, who I perceived to be a daughter of Captain Traverſe, and conſequently received her with pleaſure. I was glad to obſerve more chearfulneſs in Sir Charles's countenance than when we laſt met. He accoſted me with ſaying he was come to claim the friendſhip I had once offered him. That time, abſence, and deſpair, had made him more reaſonable, and brought him to ſee that he was preſumptuous in aiming to poſſeſs me, and not thinking that my ac-

quaintance and converſation was more happineſs than he merited. I told him mine would be greater, if he would ceaſe to flatter: an effect which I might hope from the improvement of his reaſon, of which he boaſted, ſince it muſt make him know that, in what he ſaid, he far exceeded the truth, and might incline him to believe that he likewiſe exceeded my credulity.

He anſwered, that I had much miſtaken the office of reaſon, if I imagined it had altered his opinion of me; it had only made him more ſenſible of his demerits, which ſhewed too much inequality between us to give him the leaſt room for hope. 'But,' continued he, taking the young lady who accompanied him by the hand, 'let me beg your friendſhip for 'one who has kindly ſoothed my griefs, 'and turned my diſappointment into 'happineſs.' I was overjoyed at theſe words; I gathered from them that they either were already, or were to be united. I embraced and congratulated her with tranſport. She had ſo favourable a proſpect of happineſs, both from Sir Charles's good qualities, and the affluence of his fortune, that nothing could give me more pleaſure. She bluſhed, in appearance, from exceſs of ſatisfaction, and looked up at him with ſo much love and gratitude as charmed me. I could not remain long without expreſſing a deſire to know how this union was brought about, which ſeemed to me as impoſſible as any thing could be. Sir Charles aſſured me he would gratify my curioſity; which he did in the following words.

'When you deprived me of all hopes 'of obtaining your affection, having no 'longer any pleaſure or intereſt in ſo'ciety, my only aim was an abſolute re'tirement, till my paſſion ſhould be ſo 'much moderated as to allow me to en'dure company, and to enable me to be 'fit for it. To ſecure ſuch a retreat, it 'was neceſſary to chuſe ſome place where 'I was not known. This led me to the 'borders of Wales, as the moſt pro'miſing for the ſolitude I ſought. It 'anſwered my hopes. I found a little 'cottage ſituated to my wiſh; for every 'thing around it appeared as deſolate as 'my mind. Leſt I ſhould be troubled 'with viſits from any gentleman in the 'neighbourhood, I concealed my name, 'and paſſed for a man driven thither by 'poverty and diſtreſs: a certain melan'choly in my air created this report; 'and I would not contradict it, for no'thing could better favour my temper. 'None are ſo ſure of neglect as the poor; 'they may enjoy an abſolute ſolitude in 'the moſt populous city; therefore it is 'not wonderful if no one broke in upon 'my time and reflections. However, I 'had not been there long, before I be'came acquainted with Captain Tra'verſe's family, whoſe circumſtances ap'peared to correſpond with mine. Little 'inclined to extend our thoughts beyond 'ourſelves, we were made known to each 'other only by ſitting in the ſame pew 'at church; without which circum'ſtance, perhaps, we ſhould have re'mained ignorant that there was any 'unhappy perſons in the neighbour'hood beſides ourſelves. After we had 'been obliged to ſpeak civilly to each 'other, by theſe means, he one day in'vited me to go home with him after 'church. I liked the manner of his be'haviour, and was well diſpoſed to ac'cept his invitation. Towards evening, 'he aſked me if I would drink a little 'milk; adding, it might ſeem an odd 'queſtion, but it was the only offer he 'could make me, having neither tea nor 'wine, for they were too expenſive for 'perſons in his circumſtances, who 'wanted all the little money they had 'to furniſh them with more neceſſary 'things. I was greatly pleaſed to ſee 'with what eaſe they denied themſelves 'the ſmall indulgence which the lowe'ſt 'people enjoy. I would gladly have 'increaſed their income; but I feared 'to make myſelf ſuſpected of being le's 'poor than I was thought, which I 'wiſhed to avoid, till I knew whether 'they were to be truſted. Finding them 'very agreeable, I uſed frequently to 'viſit them; and they often returned it. 'I received great pleaſure from their ſo'ciety; and was more charmed with 'them, as my acquaintance with their 'tempers and conduct increaſed. The 'young lady, particularly, I found 'amiable in her diſpoſition, as, join'd 'with her beauty, to make me feel 'the regards of a friend towards her. 'She ſhewed the ſame attention to me, 'nor were her parents offended with 'our innocent affection. She was 'always employed either in attending 'her mother, taking care of the family, 'or working for them. I admired the 'alacrity and good-ſenſe with which ſhe 'performed her different duties, and

'becau

'became her companion in many of 'them. With very great difficulty I 'prevailed on the captain to ſuffer me to 'join my little family with theirs, on 'condition I ſhould pay half the ex-'pences of the whole. He objected, that 'this was more than my ſhare, and that 'he feared there was great ſimilitude in 'our circumſtances. However, at laſt, 'I ſucceeded, and we became one fa-'mily. They let me bring books there; 'and thoſe that were at work would 'often liſten to me while I read aloud: 'my lovely Fanny moſt of all, though, 'when we were alone, the time was ſel-'dom given to books. I uſed to lament 'at my misfortunes; communicated to 'her the paſſion with which my heart 'was filled, concealing none of the truth 'but my name and fortune, leaving her 'to imagine that my ill ſucceſs pro-'ceeded from my poverty. With how 'much good-ſenſe ſhe would endeavour 'to ſhew me the neceſſity of conquering 'my love! With what gentle ſweetneſs 'would ſhe try to comfort me! How 'tenderly did ſhe join with me in my 'complaints, and endeavour to ſoothe 'them! It is impoſſible I can ever re-'compenſe her for the exceſſive good-'neſs ſhe ſhewed me. I am afraid her 'kind behaviour tempted me to teaze 'her the more with my uneaſineſs. I 'felt ſo much pleaſure in being com-'forted by her, as led me to encourage 'my diſtreſs.

'I had not long made part of this 'amiable family, when Captain Tra-'verſe went to London. You already 'know what drew him thither, and the 'ill ſucceſs of his ſolicitations, as well 'as the unexpected bleſſings which Lord 'Dorcheſter's generoſity beſtowed upon 'him. I had undertaken to ſupply his 'care over his children's ſtudies during 'his abſence, which proved an agreeable 'amuſement to me, as I did not act the 'part of a ſchool-maſter long enough 'for it to loſe the pleaſure of novelty. 'Any thing new gave a turn to my 'thoughts; and was thereby of ſervice 'to me.

'Lord Dorcheſter's letter broke in 'upon the peace I began to acquire, by 'robbing me of all my companions. 'His character ſufficiently convinced me 'that he had ſome generous deſign in 'ſending for them, though he hinted it 'but darkly in his letter. This could 'not recompenſe me for their loſs, as I 'was myſelf able to relieve their diſ-'treſſes; and was determined, after being 'longer acquainted with their merits, to 'have made them eaſy. My Fanny 'promiſed not to let a poſt paſs without 'acquainting me with the event of their 'journey; and was as good as her word. 'The joy and gratitude expreſſed in her 'letter, made me envy Lord Dorcheſter 'the pleaſure of having conferred ſo 'noble an obligation on people who had 'hearts to feel it ſo ſenſibly, and eſteem 'it ſo juſtly. The captain's convenience 'would no longer ſuffer them to live at 'ſo great a diſtance from London; they 'therefore hired a houſe about twenty 'miles from it, which his lordſhip fur-'niſhed very genteelly for them. As 'my Fanny and I kept up a very con-'ſtant correſpondence, I was frequently 'ſolicited to forſake my deſolate ſolitude, 'and once more make part of their fa-'mily. At firſt melancholy was more 'powerful than their perſuaſions, and I 'reſiſted them: but I ſoon began to ac-'cuſe myſelf of obſtinacy; and, on their 'aſſuring me that they lived extremely 'retired, I conſented, and went to be a 'witneſs of, and conſequently a ſharer 'in, the happineſs, at which none can 'arrive who have not before felt the cruel 'diſtreſſes they had endured.

'But I had not enjoyed this ſatisfac-'tion many days, before I was taken ill 'of a fever. My Fanny was now my 'conſtant friend and tender nurſe, and 'ſeemed to forget the general happineſs 'in a humane concern for what I ſuf-'fered. My fever increaſed, till I grew 'ſo very ill that it appeared proper to ſend 'for a phyſician. He thought my life 'in great danger; which declaration 'made my fair nurſe inconſolable. The 'affliction in which ſhe appeared touched 'me exceſſively; I fancied I ſaw in it a 'ſofter paſſion than friendſhip. No one 'can be truly ſenſible of the pleaſure of 'being beloved, but he who has felt all 'the pangs of an unſucceſsful paſſion. 'The hopes I had formed increaſed my 'regard and eſteem for her; and one day, 'as ſhe was ſitting by my bed-ſide, I told 'her that her incomparable goodneſs had 'conquered the grief with which my 'heart was filled when I firſt knew her, 'and had taken the place of a love I 'thought eternal; therefore ſhe muſt 'not wonder, if henceforward I com-'plained of no paſſion but one for her; 'and I ſhould eſteem myſelf very happy,

'if

'if she would take her usual pains to 'comfort me. She looked stedfastly on 'me; and then calling to my servant, 'who was at the other end of the room, 'she told him my senses wandered, and 'desired him to repeat the last medicine. 'I assured her that they were never more 'perfect; and, after some time, con-'vinced her that I spoke my real and 'sober sentiments. She then burst into 'tears, and begged I would not say any 'thing that might increase her affec-'tion, or make my company give her 'more pleasure, at a juncture when it 'was very uncertain how long she should 'enjoy it. This kind reception of my 'declaration rendered me incapable of 'obeying her; and my melancholy situa-'tion so softened her mind, that she re-'turned it in the most endearing manner. 'I would not discover my real circum-'stances, desirous to try her affection to 'the utmost. Her joy appeared very 'sincere indeed, on being assured I was 'out of danger. The progress of my 'recovery gave her as much satisfaction 'as her satisfaction did me. I continued 'my addresses to her; but I found her 'return less tender as I grew better in 'health, which made me tell her that I 'wished myself sick again. However, 'I had no real cause for complaint. I 'perceived she put some constraint on 'herself, to alter a behaviour which she 'thought justifiable only during my ill-'ness, when mere compassion required a 'shew of tenderness.

'As soon as I got well, I proposed to 'marry her. She begged me not to think 'of it, for she could not possibly agree to 'add to my distresses by making me 'poorer; and thought we then lived 'happily in the innocent assurance of 'each other's affection. As this was 'an objection I could easily remove, it 'did not make me alter my design: but, 'before I confessed my real name, I was 'desirous of trying the degree of esti-'mation in which I was held by Captain 'Traverse, by making my proposal of 'becoming his son-in-law before he was 'acquainted with my fortune. But while 'I was preparing to put this scheme in 'execution, my thoughts received a new 'turn. My sickness had prevented me 'from having much conversation in the 'family; but now, being well enough 'to associate with them, I was talking 'with the captain on the change in his 'affairs, when he mentioned Lord Dor-'chester's lady. Having left him a 'batchelor, I was curious to know who 'she was; perhaps the more so for the 'jealousy I had always entertained of 'him, thinking that I perceived he was 'favoured by you. The description they 'gave me, and the raptures they were 'all in when they mentioned your beau-'ty, and every circumstance of your be-'haviour, convinced me my happy rival 'had triumphed. Though I thought 'my passion over, yet I own I was so 'much affected by this news, that I 'could not contain myself. I had grown 'easy by looking on you as a being far 'above us; one designed to be adored, 'but not possessed; one to whom all 'mankind, as well as myself, must pay 'an unavailing worship; and submitted 'patiently to the general fate. But I 'found I could not bear to think another 'enjoyed a happiness I believed above a 'mortal.

'My dearest Fanny will suffer me to 'repeat this, as my emotions were too 'visible not to be perceived by her, who 'cruelly made me ashamed of my beha-'viour by the most generous tenderness. 'She guessed you were the woman whom 'I had often described, while she was 'the confidante of my passion. Instead 'of reproaching me for harbouring in 'my breast the sparks of any other love 'than hers, she used all her softness to 'comfort me, while she tenderly grieved 'for my misfortune and her own. Thus 'was I cured of my relapse, and in a 'few days restored to my peace of mind, 'ceasing to envy Lord Dorchester his 'divine Sacharissa, and happy in my 'lovely and tender Amoret. Her father 'declared he could refuse me nothing; 'but advised us not to marry: however, 'finding us resolved, he consented. I 'then gave them all an exact account of 'my circumstances; which, you may 'imagine, did not abate the satisfaction 'then reigning in the family. I re-'mained with them at their country-'house till two days ago, that I ventured 'to come and congratulate you and 'Lord Dorchester on your union. You 'may imagine how much I was sur-'prized to find it was not compleated; 'but could not forbear coming hither to 'introduce you to my Fanny, who made 'me the happiest of men about a week 'ago by becoming my wife. And now, 'Madam, like all other romances, mine 'must end with wedlock: but permit

'me

'me to hope we ſhall never be ſo much 'tired of each other, as you muſt be of 'us both in this long ſtory.'

Sir Charles was much miſtaken; for I was never leſs ſo. I was overjoyed at acquiring two amiable friends, and at ſeeing him ſo happy. For once I reflected, with pleaſure, on the inconſtancy of mankind, ſince it had been ſo fortunate to him. I ought not to confine the happineſs of it entirely to Sir Charles, as I have received ſo much from it myſelf; for the friendſhip which has ever ſince ſubſiſted between me, Sir Charles, his lady, and her amiable family, I have always eſteemed one of the moſt pleaſing circumſtances of my life.

CHAP. XX.

I Hope your ladyſhip now thinks it time, after ſo long a digreſſion, to return to Lord Dorcheſter; for I ſhould be ſorry to carry you ſo tedious a journey, without you undertook it willingly; and yet, having little to ſay of myſelf during this interval, I am under a neceſſity of doing it, leſt I ſhould ſeem to have put in execution the lover's wiſh, and appear to have 'annihilated both ſpace and time 'to make two lovers happy.' Lord Dorcheſter travelled moſt expeditiouſly to my aunt's cottage. He found her reclined on a couch; the ſerenity of her countenance changed into the moſt dejected air, and her freſh complexion into a ſickly pale. He came ſo gently to the door, that ſhe did not hear him till he was entering the threſhold. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw him, ſhe ſtarted up; and, with eyes that ſhot forth impatience and anger, but not without a mixture of joy, cried out—'Where is my child! where 'is my Ophelia?'

The alteration Lord Dorcheſter perceived in her awakened ſo ſevere a ſenſe of the injury he had done her, that he was diſtreſſed and confounded, and could utter no more than—'She is well. For-'give me, Madam, forgive me!'

'Thank Heaven,' cried my aunt, with hands and eyes lifted towards the Heaven ſhe thanked, 'my child is well!' and then burſting into a flood of tears, ſunk down on the couch, where ſhe remained ſome time, not too much affected to utter now and then a grateful ejaculation, which would force it's way in ſpite of the tears that almoſt ſuffocated her.

My lord was too much moved to interrupt her till this painful exceſs of joy was abated, and then could do nothing but aſk her forgiveneſs for all the uneaſineſs he muſt have given her, proteſting his deſire of making her all poſſible reparation. 'As the firſt proof of it,' ſaid ſhe, 'let me know whether you give me 'a poſſibility of pardoning you, by hav-'ing the leaſt title to it. Inform me of 'every particular ſince you robbed me 'of my dear child, the delight and only 'ſupport of my life. But, before you 'enter into a detail which may take up 'time, firſt tell me where ſhe is, what is 'her ſituation, and whether ſhe ſtill does 'honour to the care I took to inſtruct her 'in the precepts of religion and virtue, 'that I may be better able to liſten to the 'reſt?'

In theſe points Lord Dorcheſter gave her full ſatisfaction, and then proceeded to relate the whole in order; only was at a loſs how I became acquainted with his deſign. He endeavoured to excuſe himſelf on account of his prejudices againſt matrimony, and expatiated on his objections to it; concluding by telling her, that his love had conquered them all, and to be united to me was the wiſh neareſt his heart; and that I had hitherto been inflexible, and, more mercileſs than Heaven, would not pardon the ſincere penitent. 'You could not have ſaid 'any thing which could have given me 'ſo ſincere a pleaſure,' replied my aunt; 'ſince this proves my niece's principles 'to be ſuch as I wiſh them. Heaven, 'indeed, forgives the ſincere penitent; 'but then the heart is there laid open, 'and the ſincerity of it is well known. 'Ophelia cannot have the ſame aſſurance 'of yours; even yourſelf cannot: we 'often miſtake the effects of diſappointed 'paſſion for real virtue. If the inno-'cence and unfeigned piety of ſo fine a 'young creature could not change your 'heart, how can one ſuppoſe any thing 'elſe will have that power? You tell 'me ſhe loves you, therefore may be 'ſure her paſſions plead in your favour; 'and could her reaſon give a ſanction to 'them, ſhe would concur with your 'wiſhes. That it has ſtrength ſufficient 'to conquer the inſtigations of her love, 'and the perſuaſions of her lover, raiſes 'her in my eſteem, and gives me a plea-

'ſure

'sure that almoſt repays me for what I 'have ſuffered on her account. Does 'not this noble command over herſelf, 'this ſteady adherence to every virtuous 'principle,' continued ſhe, 'make you 'bluſh at the remembrance of your de'ſign, to debaſe ſo much excellence? 'A little reflection, my lord, will ſhew 'you the falſe principles on which you 'have founded your obiections to ma'trimony. Are you of ſo perverſe a 'nature, that a conformity to the laws of 'God and man muſt rob ſociety of all 'it's charms? And muſt the converſa'tion of one who loves you loſe all it's 'merit as ſoon as it can be enjoyed 'without a crime? Surely no man can 'be ſo abandoned as to own ſuch de'praved ſentiments! You are, it ſeems, 'diſguſted with the behaviour of many 'wives; would you therefore, to mend 'a woman's conduct, teach her to de'ſpiſe all ties, human and divine; and, 'to render her an amiable and valuable 'companion, inſtruct her in vice? Is 'that a means of teaching her to acquit 'herſelf of the duties of ſociety, and the 'tenderer obligations of more intimate 'connections? Another of your argu'ments againſt marriage is little better 'than a proſe paraphraſe of—

"Love, light as air, at ſight of human ties,
"Spreads it's light wings, and in a moment
"flies."

'With all the abandoned rhapſody of 'voluptuous vice. You talk of free'dom and equality in a ſituation which 'entirely aboliſhes both. What can 'render a woman ſo much your ſlave, as 'having given up her fair fame, and 'that ſweet peace that goodneſs boſoms 'ever," to gratify your mean paſſions? 'Where then is the equality between 'you? You have in your power every 'pleaſure but ſelf approbation; and 'perhaps the hardened do not want 'that, while the woman has nothing left 'her but your love, which it is more her 'intereſt to keep, even by little deſpica'ble arts, than it could be in any other 'ſituation. As ſoon as reaſon begins to 'return, in what light do you imagine 'ſhe herſelf muſt ſee the man who has 'robbed her of every bleſſing in life? 'Muſt ſhe not grow uneaſy under ſuch 'circumſtances, and deteſt the ungenerous 'mind that could draw her into an ac'tion, whoſe conſequences were to her 'ſo grievous, and to him ſo trifling, that 'unleſs honour makes him, rather than 'deſert the woman he has ruined, en'dure the effects of her afflicted heart, 'and the fretfulneſs which naturally 'ariſes from it, he is under no worldly 'diſadvantage.'

Lord Dorcheſter liſtened with all the humility of a ſchool-boy to his monitor, and gave her no interruption, but, with a doleful face, and a ſimple ſheepiſhneſs that he never felt before, cried, now and then—'Very true, Madam—Right, 'Madam—To be ſure, Madam,' and ſuch like ſentences of mild and baſhful approbation; till my aunt thought it cruel to humble him any longer into ſuch a ſneaking repentant boy. When ſhe ended her ſermon, he aſſured her that he was perfectly convinced of the truth of all ſhe had ſaid; and proteſted, with an air of ſincerity that almoſt convinced her, that if he might have the free choice whether he ſhould have her niece for his wife or miſtreſs, he ſhould not heſitate a moment, but prefer that ſtate which ſhould ſecure her from the cenſure of the world, and the reproaches of her own conſcience. He abjured his paſt errors, ſhewed the fallacies which had given riſe to them, and confuted his own arguments ſo much more forcibly than my aunt could do, that ſhe was touched with his candour, and grieved for the pernicious education and examples which had created any blemiſhes in a mind that ſeemed naturally virtuous and upright. When he had ſucceeded thus far, it was not very difficult to move a heart by nature tender, and ſoftened by affliction. The exceſs of his grief excited her compaſſion, and pity had ſome ſhare in making her promiſe to accompany him; though, when ſhe did it, ſhe imagined her only motive was the deſire of ſeeing me. During their journey, his diſtreſs prevailed on her to undertake to obtain his forgiveneſs. He did not doubt but my regard for her, and the opinion I had both of her judgment and principles, would make me ſubmit to her perſuaſions; eſpecially as he was too ſenſible they correſponded with the ſecret, though ſuppreſſed, wiſhes of my heart. When they arrived in London, I had, according to the plan I had formed, left my lodging; and, to ſave my kind landlady the pain of telling a falſhood, did not acquaint her with the place which I intended for my aſylum. Mr. South, to avoid be-

ing importuned to diſcover my abode, changed his habitation likewiſe, and choſe one whom he could truſt to watch Lord Dorcheſter's coming to town. His ſpy performed his office ſo well, that he heard it the night of his arrival, and was told by him that he ſaw my lord hand a lady out of his chariot.

Mr. South aſked me if I did not imagine from this my lord had ſucceeded, and in reality brought up my aunt. I could not believe there was a poſſibility of her giving ſuch a ſanction to his paſt conduct; however, I wiſhed to be entirely certain: I dared not, indeed, conſent that Mr. South ſhould venture to Lord Dorcheſter's, leſt, by watching him, my retreat might be diſcovered, as it was before; but told him that, as they would naturally go to my old lodgings, if my lord had really prevailed on her to accompany him, we might gain ſome intelligence from thence. Mr. South went thither accordingly the next morning, and learnt that Lord Dorcheſter and a lady, whom they found by their diſcourſe was my aunt, came there as ſoon as they entered London, and, aſking for me, were under the greateſt conſternation at hearing I was gone from thence. The good woman told them my motive; but, at the ſame time, aſſured them ſhe knew not to what place I was removed. Upon this information, they went away much diſappointed, after having promiſed her any reward, if ſhe could contrive a means of finding me out. She told them ſhe wanted no other inducement to do that, than the pleaſure I ſhould receive from ſeeing an aunt I ſeemed to love ſo tenderly.

As I was at a very great diſtance from my old lodgings, Mr. South thought that to go back to me would be robbing me of ſome hours of joy; and therefore, inſtead of returning, went to Lord Dorcheſter, where he found his lordſhip and my aunt concerting meaſures for finding me. The ſight of him was moſt welcome to the former; with delight he received him, and entreated him to inform an anxious parent, and the ſtill tenderer anxiety of a lover, where I was.

As this was the intent of Mr. South's viſit, he immediately complied, and offered them to guide them to me. The equipage was ſent for, and ſtopped at my door, ſome time after my impatience for the account I expected Mr. South to bring had fixed me to the window, in hopes of ſeeing him arrive.

At the ſight of my aunt, I ran to meet her; and we received each other with an embrace from which the ſpectators thought we could never be diſengaged. I had already felt how much the imagination falls ſhort of the reality in ſorrow; I now found it as poor a mirror of our joy. The extaſy I was in at ſeeing one ſo inexpreſſibly dear to me, far exceeded the force of fancy, and a long time paſſed in rejoicing at the felicity we felt, before I took notice of the perſon who accompanied my aunt.

My lord looked on me with tenderneſs and grief, but with an anxious timorouſneſs that rendered him ſilent. My aunt obſerving it, as ſoon as we could think of any thing but the joy of meeting, told me ſhe had undertaken to plead what I ſhould think a bad cauſe, unleſs I would allow repentance waſhed away ſin. She then proceeded to ſay ſhe thought Lord Dorcheſter had ſuffered ſo much, he deſerved to be forgiven. I objected all I had before ſaid to myſelf and others on the occaſion. I arraigned his principles and conduct with more ſeverity, I believe, for finding he had an advocate; for I felt a ſatisfaction in hearing him a little excuſed. My aunt's arguments were much the ſame with Miſs Baden's, and would not have proved more efficacious, had it not been eaſier to influence my heart than to convince my reaſon. Her opinion gave a ſanction for my yielding; I could call my weakneſs obedient. An opportunity of ſo agreeably deceiving myſelf, ſtaggered my reſolution, and I began to liſten with pleaſure to the apology my aunt made for him.

As ſoon as Lord Dorcheſter had perceived me wavering between reaſon and love, to ſtrengthen the party of the latter, he attacked me with the moſt perſuaſive importunity. Though my heart felt every ſyllable he uttered, yet my mind was too much agitated to ſuffer my memory to retain what he ſaid; all I know is, that every word, every look, every action of his, ſpoke too much to be expreſſed by any other. Such powerful eloquence was not to be for ever reſiſted; unable to bear a longer continuance of the ſcene, I cried out—'You have con-'quered all my reſolutions; diſpoſe of 'the remainder of my life as you pleaſe; 'my happineſs is in your hands: I

'may repent, but I find I muſt com-
'ply!'

Lord Dorcheſter's exceſſive joy made me feel that pleaſure in my conſent, which reaſon had denied me. My felicity was perfect, in ſeeing I had made him happy; I was inſenſible to any dangers with which my peace was threatened by his principles, while I had the infinite ſatisfaction of imparting happineſs to one that was dearer to me than myſelf. I felt I was unworthy of a thought; mine were all engroſſed by him; every other object ſeemed beneath my care; and, if he was happy, I believed I muſt be bleſſed.

As ſoon as his lordſhip's extaſies were a little over, my aunt turned toward him, and ſaid—'My lord, I have done all you 'aſked of me: I have ſuffered compaſ-'ſion, and that weak ſympathy which I 'believe all feel for the pains of lovers, 'who have themſelves known the pangs 'of love, to conquer my opinion. I have 'perſuaded the only joy of my heart, and 'bleſſing of my age, to an union with a 'man whoſe principles I always looked 'upon as an infallible ſource of unhap-'pineſs to the woman whoſe fate muſt 'depend upon them. I never ſaw any 'thing but repentance ſucceed a mar-'riage with a rake; and yet, compaſſion 'for you, and indeed for my niece, 'whoſe fondneſs for you is but too viſi-'ble through all the reſolution ſhe has 'aſſumed, has made me plead your cauſe, 'and prevail in it. I feared for her, the 'grief which would have ſucceeded the 'ſharper pains of ſeparation. I, who have 'felt it, know how hardly life is ſup-'ported under a load of ſorrow. I pitied 'you for having a worthy mind ſo cor-'rupted. Can you do leſs, my lord, than 'reward Ophelia's love and my compaſ-'ſion, by preſerving the principles you 'now profeſs, and by keeping the ſtricteſt 'guard over yourſelf, leſt you ſhould 'again deviate from the path of virtue? 'I know you are not abſolutely a rake; 'and therein I place my hopes.'

Your ladyſhip may imagine Lord Dorcheſter was not ſparing of his promiſes. He defended himſelf from the imputation of a rake, though he confeſſed his principles had been very defective, and gave her every aſſurance that could make her eaſy; and, what is more extraordinary, he fulfilled them all, and rendered the reſt of our lives a ſcene of bliſs; though I confeſs, it was not immediately I could depend on my own happineſs. I feared reverſes, which would be more ſeverely felt for the felicity I enjoyed. But time baniſhed my apprehenſions, and taught me, that a mind naturally good may be clouded for a time, but will recover it's original luſtre, and ſhake off the bad influence of vicious examples, and the erroneous opinions of the faſhionable world, if it has the good fortune to ſuffer ſufficiently by them.

But as that does not happen ſo often as one could wiſh, for the reformation of mankind; and it is difficult to know when a perſon has been ſufficiently puniſhed to effect his amendment; mine was a dangerous trial: and I think my imprudence in making it, deſerved a puniſhment rather than a reward; which has increaſed my gratitude to Heaven for a ſtate of happineſs I by no means merited.

Lord Dorcheſter, to gratify himſelf in his darling pleaſure of doing good, procured a very conſiderable preferment for Mr. South, and behaved with the utmoſt generoſity to my aunt: he ſettled a very handſome income on her; and, to gratify both her and me, made ſuch additions to her little cottage, as gave us the power of accompanying her thither, where we ſpent three months in every year, which, in the opinion of us all, was the time when we enjoyed the moſt perfect happineſs; as we were there free from interruptions.

Lord Dorcheſter was very deſirous of knowing how I became acquainted with his deſigns on me; but I made his giving a ſolemn promiſe never to aſk any queſtions concerning it, one of the conditions of our marriage. I feared his reſentment againſt Lord Larborough, had he been acquainted with the part he acted; and ſhould have been very ſorry if Lord Larborough had ſuffered by making a diſcovery that was ſo fortunate for me; beſides, that Lord Dorcheſter might have been expoſed to his ſhare of danger had a quarrel enſued. Lord Larborough was, I believe, under no ſmall apprehenſions on finding what turn the affair had taken; but I ſeized the firſt opportunity of making him eaſy, by giving my word that I would conceal every thing he had done, in conſideration of the obligation he thereby conferred on me, and that he might reſt in perfect ſecurity in that particular.

He returned me many thanks; aſſuring me, that he would ever gratefully acknowledge it; and, to prevent all poſſibility of giving me any future offence,

by

by a paſſion he was unable to ſtifle, he would by degrees break off his intimacy with my lord, and avoid me as much as he could. This reſolution he ſteadily executed; and before he died, which was two years after my marriage, he had almoſt entirely dropped our acquaintance. After his death, as no danger could ariſe from it, I acquainted my lord with what he had too ſtrict a regard to his promiſe to have aſked of me, telling him all that paſſed between Lord Larborough and myſelf; which, he ſaid, rendered his lordſhip rather the object of his gratitude than of his anger, ſince the happy effects of what he had done excuſed the intention.

Having obeyed your ladyſhip's commands, I ſhall now lay aſide my pen, without making any apology for being ſo circumſtantial; ſince obedience to your orders made me ſo; but ſhall grieve in ſilence, that it was not in my power to render this little work more worthy of her who is to honour it with a peruſal. If I have in ſome places repeated compliments which lay me under an imputation of vanity, I hope you will conſider it as the unavoidable conſequence of telling one's own ſtory with the ſincerity you required; and as a neceſſary thing, in order to keep up in my reader ſuch an idea of my perſon, as may repreſent me more worthy of her attention, which you might have thought thrown away on a dowdy; and deprived me of the honour of ſubſcribing myſelf,

Your ladyſhip's moſt obedient
Humble Servant,
OPHELIA DORCHESTER.

FINIS.